Vol. CIII No. 2 January 16, 1976 60 cents

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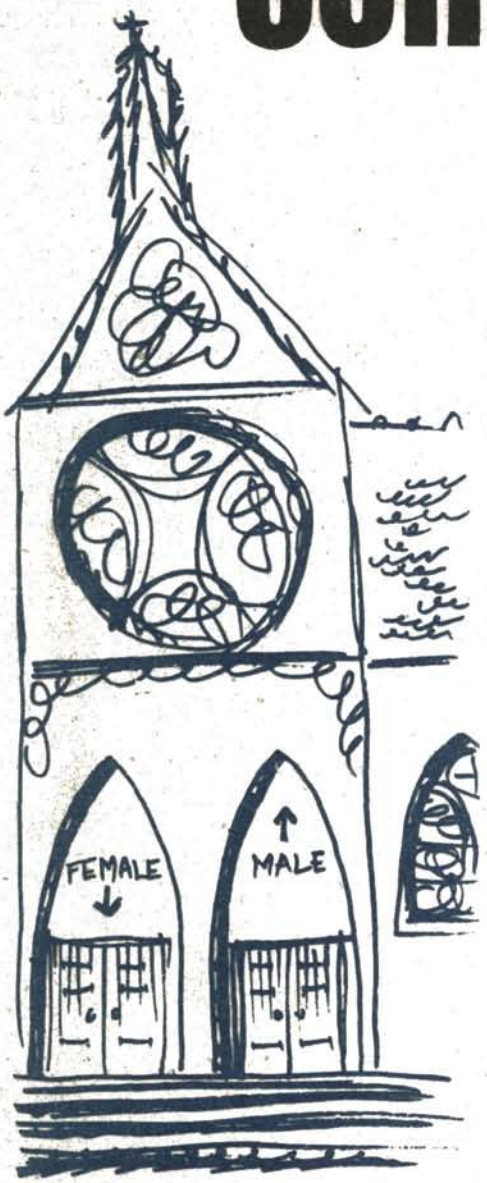

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

TISSA BALASURIYA

THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

A Statement by the President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin

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NEWS & VIEWS

Gerard Manley Hopkins

The name of Gerard Manley Hopkins has been added to the company of English poets (and an occasional outsider like Longfellow) enshrined in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey —the closest place in this world, by some opinion, to a heaven-haven for poets who used the English language, beginning with Chaucer, "the grandfather of the tribe."

Hopkins lived from 1844 to 1889, entered Catholicism under the influence of Newman, and took the priesthood as a Jesuit. His life was lonesome and desperate, and was touchingly recalled by another Jesuit, Father Peter Levi, at the enshrinement service:

"Was he one of those who overcome, or was he one of the defeated? He was obscure in his life, eccentric and personal in his habits, he suffered intensely in ways we can hardly understand and he could hardly express, he belonged to a tiny and somewhat desperate minority in religion, he was not taken seriously as a poet or a scholar, he was not let live among the Lancashire poor, whom he loved, he was tormented by scruples, he came close to despair, he died nastily and unnecessarily of typhoid. If there is something convincing in his poetry, his drawings, in all his writings, it convinces intimately, as if we knew him more completely than we know each other. He must have been terribly vulnerable and strangely complete as a human being. He could feel the sap drying up in the branches of his life, he could hear the Spirit of God crying out in the long desert of the 19th century, he could hear the beating of iron wings. . . .

"Father Hopkins wrote few hymns, nor did he preach many sermons, wonderful as they are, nor were they very successful. It is simply that in many private poems and writings of his we can sense a profound and God-given liberty. In the conversation of his soul he spoke freely, in his understanding of every natural thing he felt very freely. When he died, God's work was complete in him."

Hopkins' place is a tablet of black stone only a few feet from the bust of the last Roman Catholic to be memorialized in the Poets' Corner—John Dryden, who died in 1700.

Appropriately enough, the enshrinement marked the centenary of Hopkins' celebrated poem, *The Wreck of the Deutschland* — which Hopkins first submitted to the Jesuit periodical, *The Month*, which, in turn, rejected it.

The current issue of *The Month* contains an apology for its literary goof, one of the greatest in the history of publishing. But after a hundred years, the editors are still rationalizing, still consoling themselves. "The one unwise blunder," they wrote, "has gained for *The Month* more notoriety than all the distinguished articles it has since published." Small satisfaction, that.

The Bicentennial Song

While England is enshrining genius, Congress is exalting schmaltz.

At the behest of Rep. Edward J. Patten (D.-N.J.), Congress has proclaimed as the official song of the Bicentenary this piece of drivel by one Art Sutton (Johnny D'Arc, ASCAP) of Middletown, N.J.:

Keep America Free

I see the face of God in the land I love.
I see the wings of a hawk and a dove.
I see the little people, just like me,
Saying, 'Keep America Free.'
I see the Pittsburgh steel and the Kansas wheat.
I see the Statue of Liberty.
And all those little people, just like me,
Saying, 'Keep America Free':

Free from hunger, free from want,
Free from misery.
Free from the right wing.
Free from the left wing.
Free as the eagle flying free.

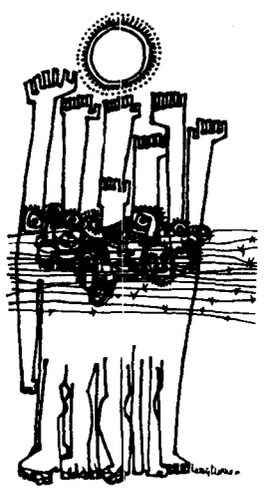
I see the face of God in the land I love.
I see the little people, just like me,
Saying, 'Keep America Free . . .'
Saying, 'Keep America Free.'

Rep. Patten had the words of the song read into the *Congressional Record*. It is said to be only the third song to be so honored. The others? George M. Cohan's *Over There*, and Irving Berlin's *God Bless America*.

Dan Berrigan, S.J.

Daniel Berrigan's Christmas greetings to friends detail his latest "witness" and feelings of moral outrage:

"On Nov. 25, 13 of us postamericans entered the White House with the usual throng of tourists, but with a slightly different idea in mind. We wanted to dramatize the current nuclear death race in which our government is Number One Downhill Runner. We carried banners and costumes concealed on our persons. Once through the tour we assembled on the south lawn. There, some of us unfurled our messages ('The only civil defense is civil disobedience,' 'Digging shelters is digging graves') to the eyes of the public and the winds of heaven.



For the People/LNS

"Meanwhile, others of us threw aside jackets and stood revealed, funereal and celebratory; four in specter of death black, one in a resplendent Uncle Sam outfit. Sam appeared to be positively jocose; a successful life detergent and death hunter. He embraced Death with fervor. His business is death and death is good business. . . .

"Toward noon, shovels were produced and a quick dig began on the Bright House lawn. Uncle Sam and Death labored fervently, if briefly—turning up a shelter against bombs—which exactly resembled a human grave.

"We were arrested and all of us will be tried . . . ; trespass, destroying gov't property.

"As I reflect on it, our action was a message, looking toward Christmas. A child is born in the mad inn of the world. Nothing—neither his helpless estate nor his beauty nor his innocence of crime—nothing of these will avail, in 1975, to exempt the Christ from nuclear incineration. His slaughter, in the person of millions of children of the world, is contemplated calmly by the mad prestidigitators who have made us part of their obscene act—digging like rodents.

"Something in us would like to say, Thank you, criminal sirs, but no thank you. . . ."

Odds and Ends

—The secretary of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, Abbé Sustar, suggests an intriguing possibility: the "theological recycling" of bishops. No formula offered, however. Would you melt 'em down in a thurifer? JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Heywood Broun

Woodstock, N.Y.

To the Editors: It is, of course, difficult to catch the "essence" of Heywood Broun, ["Journalism and Integrity," Nov. 7]. Like many complex people he is not so reducible. He was a man driven by a host of fears to a series of courageous acts.

He was afraid to ride in automobiles and willing to risk his life for a belief. He was shy and fearful in personal relationships and openly in love with mankind.

The number of his paradoxes was endless and inexplicable and do not add up to anything but the two words "Heywood Broun."

For all his faults, some of which have been hard to forgive, his final triumph was, from the rack of his dual nature, to speak with the single voice of passionate conviction.

HEYWOOD HALE BROUN

Boston's Busing

Nahant, Mass

To the Editor: I was surprised to see Maurice Ford ["Busing in Boston," Oct. 10] quoting Dapper O'Neil with approval and giving Louise Day Hicks a kindly pat on the back. Here in Massachusetts we have watched these two over the long, hard years playing shrewdly on the racial fears of their fellow-citizens, to their own political advantage and the disadvantage of both white and black. I wouldn't quote Dapper O'Neil to prove that the sun also rises, for fear of prejudicing my case.

And it doesn't help too much to justify it by quoting Robert Coles. Coles was speaking to self-righteous, affluent intellectuals at Harvard and everybody knows these types need strong medicine. If there is any self-righteous, affluent intellectuality among us, let us think on his words by all means. And let us also think on

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COMMONWEAL
A review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published biweekly
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1976 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada: $15 a year. Foreign $17. Single copies 60c

SAVING PLANET EARTH

The United States enters the new year with some notable gains having been made in the closing weeks of the old year towards the salvaging of the environment—what's left of it, that is. The Environmental Protection Agency has "tentatively" decided that the supersonic jet airplane is too noisy for Washington and New York airports, and the House has followed up that opinion with a six-month ban on all supersonic jetline landings in the country. At the same time, President Ford has signed into law the comprehensive Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, with features far more significant than most of what was suggested by the prolonged media focus on the roll-back of crude-oil prices.

Neither development—congratulatory though one may be about both—is reason however for complacency. Precious natural resources continue to be gobbled up at unconscionable rates; the consumption of energy leaps ahead so as to double every eleven years; pollution ever increases, doubling every fourteen years.

One would like to think that last month's developments signaled a turnabout in environmental values, and that a new concern is aborning. But unfortunately such does not appear to be the case. The White House is not enthusing over the restrictions placed on the supersonic plane. Likewise, short of some last-hour emergency, it is doubtful that Mr. Ford will use what is perhaps the most important section of the Energy Act: that granting authority to institute gasoline rationing and other conservation measures. Mr. Ford's preoccupation remains control of energy prices, when, of course, it should be on control of consumption.

Meanwhile, the rest of the developed world plays its games of Russian roulette with the environment, with stakes that overleap national boundaries. The Russian supersonic plane, for instance, is operational, and the British-French Concorde will be on regular runs any day now. If one of the great

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perils of these planes is a cooling of the earth because of the exhaust they will spew in the windless upper-atmosphere, then it makes no difference whether their destinations are Washington and New York—or Soviet Kazakhstan and the Persian Gulf island of Bahrain on the far side of the world. Ozone depletion will occur, whatever the remoteness of the runs, with worldwide effects on the amount of solar energy reaching the earth, as well as on the molecular structures that normally shield the earth from cancer-producing solar ultraviolet rays. As these effects accumulate, we will all pay the price.

The point of all this is that it is not enough for the United States to have a constructive energy/conservation policy. There must be a global one embracing all nations of the world, in the same way that there should be—but isn't—an all-embracing international nuclear-arms policy. The threats of the one are not so incomparable to those of the other that the challenges of the two are not to be equated.

As with arms, so with energy/conservation: the stakes are so vast and the chances of upsetting fragile balances so increasingly widespread among nations that it is foolhardy (not to say presumptuous) for one or two nations, or even a handful, to attempt to program among themselves what is best for the world at large. If the attempt to control nuclear weapons has taught political leaders anything, it should be that it is not enough for superpowers like the United States and the USSR to reach their bilateral accords—not when nuclear capacity is within the technology of probably a score of other nations, with several already having achieved strike power. In our shrinking world, accords of potentially cosmic consequences must be binding on all nations—which means, ideally, that all nations should be party to negotiations towards policy.

All of which is to say that it is past time for some nation or nations, maybe the United Nations itself, to take the lead in the formulation of an enlightened energy/conservation policy that will guarantee for the benefit of all the wisest and fairest uses of what nature and the earth have left to offer. From every humane vantage point, it is intolerable that dollars, greed, established living patterns, mere technological know-how and narrow political considerations should be the prime determinants in what of air, land and sea is exploited, at what rate, how and to whose advantage.

In order is an international conference of the scope of that held a few years ago in Stockholm on world population. The Stockholm conference, admittedly, was not so impressive by way of results as it was in concept, partially because it got bogged down in conflicting moral and nationalistic considerations. A similar conference on energy, the environment and conservation would have its own sets of conflicts no less difficult; at the same time, positive results of such a conference would doubtlessly not be immediately discernible, just as they have not been so far as the population conference is concerned. Nevertheless, the idea is not to be dismissed. Such a conference could have the vital effect of dignifying the energy and conservation questions in a manner that neither is now. And—who knows?—maybe out of this will come sensitivities that will make the twenty-first century just a little more livable for people of that day. As things are headed now, this century's legacy to the next promises to be a heavily poisoned atmosphere and a largely exhausted earth.

WASHINGTON REPORT

NOT WHO, BUT WHAT

The road to the White House is paved with good intentions. This presidential year is no exception.

The Republicans will be offered a choice of a non-elected President, Gerald Ford, the first time this has been the case because he was appointed to the Vice Presidency as well, and Ronald Reagan, former Governor of California who wants to come East. Republican Senator Mathias of Maryland, atypical of the predominant thinking in his party, has suggested recently that the party will fall apart, as did the Whigs in the mid-nineteenth century over slavery, unless it mends its backward ways. Mathias even said he's willing to run for President as candidate of a sort of "citizens' coalition." However, Mathias, in the way of other "liberal" beleaguered Republicans in the Congress, is elected with the indispensable help of Democratic voters—a fact not endearing to hardline Toryism of Republican Party leaders. He's not apt to be a variant of a latter-day Wendell Wilkie, even if for no other reason than the circumstances aren't comparable.

Then there is the Democratic party. Democrats have been announcing their candidates for their party's nomination at the rate of one a month. There's apt to be a baker's dozen of them by ground-hog's day. The more, the hairier, even if most are quite competent.

Party affiliation to the contrary, the presidential nominees, who'll be chosen at the party conventions this summer, are most likely to share one characteristic—conventionality. Both Ford and Reagan are political descendants of Senator Robert Taft; most of the contest-

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ing Democrats are political descendants of FDR. Each nominee, in other words, will have more ties to the past than to the future, a condition substantially changing in the Congress with each biennial election. Among the numerous competing Democrats for the nomination there are a couple who might be called transitional candidates —as Robert Kennedy would have been had he lived and been nominated. U.S. Rep. Morris Udall of Arizona is one example. But an older, Humphrey-esque competitor is more apt to become the nominee.

This is not to contend that there is a need for a candidate of either party who is a non-politician running against the system. Twenty years ago or so, Adlai Stevenson suggested that we insult our democratic system, with all its imperfections, when we adopt such a view. We even make it vulnerable, he said, to that man-on-horseback. "We have lost faith in everything we fight and stand for," Stevenson said when we do this.

He compared government to a pump—". . . what it pumps up is just what we are . . . no better, no worse."

One problem is now that we have entered a presidential year, it is almost impossible to wrest from each candidate responses as to the "what" of things rather than the "how" of convincing party workers and voters that he should receive the nomination. The "now," too, of raising funds and dealing with the press, as well as scheduling and other mechanics of a campaign.

The "what" of things is deeper and broader. Is Jeffersonianism more of a hindrance than a help? Jefferson seemed to be putting forward the view that government is not to be relied upon to achieve an open and just society. Such a society is achieved, he argued, by "social forces" exerted by free men. Let government insist that all citizens be treatedly fairly and the good society would come about. But John Calhoun and others looked differently at how society should be structured and a civil war was fought, in part against slavery, and a century later, today, our government has yet to provide a condition of fair play to its "free" citizens.

Not that efforts haven't been made. Beginning in the 1930s, most noticeably, the federal government became a participant, rather than an umpire, in domestic affairs. The goad to this activism was, of course, the Great Depression at the depth of which 25 million were without jobs. Relatively speaking, we're back at work, but at the expense of a governmental bureaucracy, at federal, state and local levels, wherein decisions are most difficult to carry out. About one in every six Americans works for government of some form. Parkinson's Law prevails in that government tries to spread its authority and operations. Correspondingly, the cost of government rises. As someone has written, we could reach the point, ideal for Organizational Man, wherein everything that is not forbidden should be made mandatory.

Presidential power-grabbing, culminating in the worst offender of all, Mr. Nixon, forced in disgrace from the presidency more than two years ago, has weakened Americans' faith in even the legitimate functions of government—prevent crime and enforce contracts, for example. Evidence of abuse of the law by the FBI and CIA, brought to light by congressional investigations, reinforces the disillusionment with the federal government. This has resulted in a burgeoning cry that all sorts of powers, now accrued or assigned to the Feds, should be reassigned to state and/or local governments. Revenue-sharing is a recent example of a trend in this direction, although there is consistent evidence that state and local governments are not living up to their advance billing as more efficient and effective dispensers of tax-funds.

With inflation and unemployment prime characteristics of the economy, the need for responsible federal managers is compelling. Dr. Arthur Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, indicated in a speech the other day that structural reform is needed in the economy—a rather bold statement for him.

As the economy continues to dis-improve, Americans become vulnerable to brute proposals for repairs. In this election year, this vulnerability becomes particularly more hazardous.

It would be helpful if the competitors for the presidential nominations would have a few wise words to say on this and related subjects, domestic or foreign. Let us hope this year will be different from other recent presidential election years.

SISYPHUS

MARY OLIVER

BEAR RIVER

I got into Bearsville about five
The Catskills blue in the distance.
A mill town.

I parked in the municipal lot,
Put money in the slot,
And gazed awhile at the Bear River

Which pours all year from the mountains
Lacy and cold,
Full of the shadows of trout and fern, full
Of the dream of plenty;

Then slows up;
Then falls willingly into harness;
Then shakes with the influx of toxins;
Then foams under the bridges and out of town.

Later, in a restaurant, I asked for water.
The waitress brought it and I drank it:
A dreamless cloud swirling in a paper cup.

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THE DISPLACED HOMEMAKER

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

It was predictable, I suppose, that when I was one of the speakers at the recent national conference of Divorced and Separated Catholics, my presence was widely publicized but my subject—the plight of the displaced homemaker—was not. Other topics made better headlines. But these displaced homemakers are the people most in need of help, if I can judge by my mail. To most of them the theological discussions are highly academic: nationwide two-thirds of divorced women never remarry; the percentage of Catholic women, who do, obviously, is much smaller. Statistics in this area are sparse and questionable, but it is a good guess that there are one-and-a-half-million Catholic women divorced, or separated, who will never remarry. Their problem is not only psychological and emotional suffering. Their problem is economic survival.

These women need pastoral support and the aid of the Catholic community to feel that they still have a place in the parish and the church. They also need organized help to redress the injustice inherent in their situation. New studies show that *only 14.7% of such women receive support payments and only 15% of those* receive it regularly. Probably more than half of them have children to care for. Because they have been out of the conventional job market, or because they cannot work full time, they can find only the most low-paid employment, no matter how skilled they are.

Their situation has its source in the fact that a woman who marries in the United States loses her separate legal identity. There is a widespread misconception that she gets financial security in return for this loss. The experience of divorced and separated women—and widows, as well—makes it clear that nothing could be further from the truth. State laws calling for a husband to support his family require only that he provide the "necessaries" of food and shelter and *he decides what those necessaries are.* The usual case cited in law books is that of a well-to-do Nebraska farmer who refused to provide any running water or appliances in the home for his wife of 34 years. The court held that he was providing "the necessaries." Furthermore, as long as a homemaker lives under the same roof with her husband she cannot go to the courts for any increase in a support allowance. After a lifetime together a widow may receive one-half to one-third of her husband's estate if—*if he hasn't made other arrangements.* One wife on record helped her husband save $250,000 by the most stringent economies—foregoing a home of their own and raising and canning as much of their food as she could. He left it all to an animal shelter in memory of his dog!

The married woman has no right to her spouse's pension, *unless* the pension system allows this option and *he chooses to exercise it.* The married woman is not covered by Social Security in her own right. She has no access to disability insurance or workman's compensation. Her unpaid labor is not counted under the law as constituting any investment or contribution to the acquisition of their joint property, whether she works in the home *or in a business operated by her husband.* If she inherits any of the property she has to pay a state inheritance tax. If she dies (except in a few community property states), he does not. Except in Texas and the state of Washington marital property is under the control of the husband whether the wife has bought it with her own money or not.

These provisions of the law are not only unjust, but unbelievably humiliating to the spirit. As long ago as 1840 Jane Gray Swisshelm, the brilliant abolitionist, felt their weight and could not bear to spell out, but could only imply the comparison to the slavery she so abhorred. She had nursed her mother through her final illness against the wishes of her husband.

"He felt himself wronged and became angry but he had one remedy. Being the owner of my person and services, he had the right to wages for the time spent nursing mother, and would file his claim against her executors.

"I do not know why I should have been so utterly overwhelmed by this proposal to execute a law passed by Christian legislators for the government of Christian people—a law which had never been questioned by any nation or state, or church, and was in full force all over the world. Why should the discovery of its existence curdle my blood, stop my heart-beats, and send a rush of burning shame from forehead to finger-tip?"

The actual dollar-value of a homemaker's contribution as cook, cleaner, chauffeur, child-tender, household nurse, etc., is under dispute; estimates vary from an annual $6,000 to $20,000. But there can be no dispute about the loss of salary incurred if she stays out of the job market until her children are fourteen: it ranges from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands depending on her level of education.

"But," says Elizabeth C. Spaulding in the report on Marriage and Divorce issued by the National Organization of Women, "no divorce reform bill guarantees restitution of these dollar losses. In 48 states the homemaker-wife lives in a feudal world working at a feudal job in servitude to a husband who can walk out at any time and get a divorce which throws her and the children into the 20th Century within three to six

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WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

TISSA BALASURIYA

The Harrowing of Hell, 13th-century mosaic, St. Mark's, Venice

We cannot expect to evolve an adequate theology of women's rights from the New Testament or the life of the early church

Today the Catholic Church gives the impression of being the last refuge of male chauvinism. The office of the pope will probably be the last post to be open to women—if even this were to happen this side of paradise. The Catholic priesthood is not only a preserve of the males; it is still forbidden for Catholic priests to be married. Yet the development of the struggle of the women for their promotion, emanicipation and liberation is posing a serious question to Catholic thinking. The UN Year of the Women, 1975, coincided with Pope Paul's Holy Year which has "Reconciliation" as its theme. Will the Catholic Church reconcile itself to the equal dignity of men and women during this holy year?

The attitude of the Catholic Church towards women's rights depends both on its theoretical teachings and its practical policies. Both these are deeply influenced by the cultures that have prevailed in the so-called Christian societies. Theology is the reflection on the revealed teachings of God. Theologians provide the main material for the teachings of the Church. The present phenomenal advance of women in the assertion of their rights presents an important issue to theologians and Catholics in general. How can this issue be faced?

There are different approaches. Some are traditionalist and want the woman confined to the homes—children, kitchen and church as they say in German. They invoke the long line of traditional theological thought. Others are more liberal. They advocate respect for women, and provision of a special place for them due to their being the stronger or weaker sex. They say all persons are equal, but women are different and should be treated as such. This leads to a certain protectionism and paternalism. It does not fundamentally alter the position of male dominance. A third attitude is to affirm the equality of all persons and to try to remove all disparities in treatment as these are almost wholly due to the cultural conditioning of our societies. How do theologians react to all this? What method is to be invoked in the evolution of a theology concerning women?

The usual method is to return to the Scriptures of the early church and to find there reasons for or against the emancipation of women. One such line of argument is that the Christian Scriptures speak of the supporting role of the woman from the very beginning of history and of this relationship as seen in the story of Genesis. Numerous citations can be found in the Scriptures in favor of an inferior position being given to women. The example of Jesus, too, is frequently mentioned insofar as he did not choose women to be among the 12 apostles who were to be the chief continuers of his mission and the authority in the community he founded. The fact that Jesus was a man is also said to favor masculine superiority. This approach also makes frequent use of St. Paul's sayings concerning the role of women as being made to be more seen than heard in the Christian community. The example of the early church is also mentioned. The apostles and later popes and bishops seemed to think that the highest ecclesiastical position a woman could be given was that of a deaconess. This school of thought would also argue from the history of the church and from canon law in favor of the privileged position of the male in human society and in the church. They

FATHER TISSA BALASURIYA, O.M.I., *former president of Aquinas College, Colombo, is Asian chaplain of the Catholic Students Movement.*

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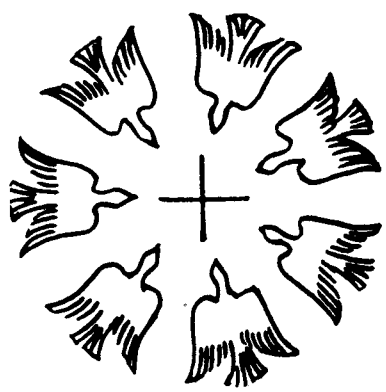
would therefore maintain that women cannot be priests and much less bishops or pope. All these are founded on the basic conception that the woman is an inferior being compared to the man.

Another line of thought gaining ground today is that Jesus was a liberator of women and that he did not support the discrimination against women that was prevalent in the Jewish society of his time. Instances are mentioned of the relationship of Jesus with women such as the adulteress, the Samaritan woman at the well, Martha and Mary, Mary Magdalen and above all his own mother. It is also thought that in the early church women had a greater degree of equality than in the Jewish-Greco-Roman society of the day. There is a certain amount of truth in this position too insofar as Jesus sometimes went against the traditions and customs of the time and adopted a more humane and liberal attitude towards women. However, it is one thing to say this and another to claim that an adequate theology of the role and rights of women in modern society can be developed on the basis of the New Testament, Scriptures or the examples of the early church alone, for the issues that are raised up today are quite different in their breadth and depth. It may be asked how far the questions of today concerning the liberation of women at a world-wide level can be inspired by these texts.

Still another attitude is to recognize the evolutionary character of revelation by God, that God's revelation in the Christian tradition does not necessarily reach its ultimate point in every aspect with the New Testament or the life of the apostles. For we see a continuing evolution in the church of its own understanding of the Christian message even in matters concerning the moral law. We know that there has been a gradual evolution of that within the church with reference to such matters as slavery, polygamy, democracy, socialism, etc. The fact is that the Christian community itself learns from the world. The process of the evolution of the world has taught the church many things which it did not find originally in Scriptures or even in the explicit teachings of Jesus Christ. We may say the same concerning the rights of women.

We cannot expect to evolve an adequate theology of women's rights from the New Testament or the life of the early church. Nor need we accept as adequate the writings of great theologians like St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas or even Teilhard de Chardin. All these persons wrote at a given historical time and their attitude to women depended on the cultural context of the time. Christian theological tradition has tended to regard woman as an inferior being, a temptress, a fair defect of nature, and at best only a secondary associate of man. In this tradition the weight has been given to the celibate woman as the ideal of feminine goodness. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has been presented as the Blessed Virgin, a patient, docile mother. Even in present writings and speeches we see the presentation of woman as the ideal of docility and religiosity; whereas man is regarded as the more independent, powerful and active.

In our approach to the texts of Scripture we have to distinguish: (a) the intention of God in revealing a particular teaching at a given time; (b) the authors' own expressions (c) how these are understood in the cultural context of the time. In this we note the historical evolution of the pedagogy of God with reference to his people. Thus the law of Moses that an adulteress could be stoned or strangulated to death was not being observed in the time of Christ, partly due to the influence of the Romans. It would be sacrilegious to have to think that God wanted such a law to be maintained for all time under all circumstances. If it had any meaning it was only as understood within the context of the day. Therefore we have to critically evaluate the context of the Scripture in the light of the growth in human awareness con-



cerning what is right and just. This study is known as hermeneutics or the research into the interpretation of texts.

The evolution of the human race in its self-understanding is also a process that takes place under the guidance of Providence. It is a form of revelation to mankind by God. It takes place today mainly within secular society. Human beings become more aware of their rights and of the conditions which are truly humanizing and fulfilling for them as persons. Today we are aware that slavery is dehumanizing and hence it is of no avail to argue that Jesus Christ did not condemn slavery or that St. Paul encouraged masters to treat their slaves well. What the Bible says about slavery has to be revaluated in terms of our present consciousness of what is right and wrong. In this sense, therefore, this almost universal consciousness of the evil of slavery is a criterion for judging the Bible itself. It can help us understand the limits within which the original message was given. To defend slavery on the basis of St. Paul's statement would be fair neither to God nor to St. Paul. For, such statements were not meant as statements for all time. There are many actions of the apostles which are not necessarily meant to be imitated. Thus Paul circumcized his disciple Timothy out of consideration for the Jews.

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There are many particular lists of advice in St. Paul and the New Testament which the church has long since forgotten: e.g., that only circumcized persons should be ordained, that bishops should be the husband of one wife, etc. Why then is it that only Paul's advice regarding women's speech and headdress are remembered and not those more significant recommendations? One conclusion of this is that humanity's consciousness of right and wrong as it develops over the centuries is a guide for the critique of the understanding of the message or revelation.

This can also be applied to the problem of the rights of women. Since the modern world has advanced to a point in which the more enlightened persons recognize woman as a human person with rights equal to those of a man, then this is a criterion for judging the Scriptures and the tradition of the church, rather than vice versa. For this means that God present in mankind has made humanity more aware of its own nature and dignity. The subordination of woman to an inferior position is dehumanizing and unjust, and this cannot be the will of God. It might have been recommended for a given time, as a concession to male domination or as an acceptance of the existing situation.

Likewise for the tradition of the church. The fact that there were no women who were apostles may not be used as an argument concerning the role of women in the Christian community today since the position of women is being completely changed in civil society. What was perhaps normal in the time of the Jews and the Romans cannot be regarded as universally valid, particularly today, when we have women Prime Ministers, legislators, Everest climbers, astronauts, scientists etc. The modern world has made it possible for women to perform most of the functions which were earlier the preserve of man. There seems hardly anything so manly in the ecclesiastical offices that a woman cannot perform. A woman is capable of being Prime Minister of one of the world's largest countries, India. There is no reason why she cannot look after a diocese. We have, therefore, to question the thinking of the church about women and their rights beginning with what the secular society teaches us as a matter of experience and this I would suggest is also a theological method for the evolution of our thinking on women's rights.

It is almost futile to try to find arguments for woman's rights in the long tradition of Christian theology which has been dominated very much by males, especially by clerics and monks. Christian theological reflection has unfortunately helped to socialize male domination. It performed the same function towards feudalism, capitalism and colonialism. We do not have to be surprised by this for theology too is culture-bound. It is perhaps much better to accept that the Christian tradition has not been too favorable to women's rights in spite of the example of love and affection shown by Jesus. This need not be an impediment to us today. There are so many things which the Christian tradition has not been aware of but had to learn from the evolution of the world.

Therefore the suggestion is that a methodology for the evolution of a theology on women's rights would have to begin with thinking of the more enlightened persons in our contemporary society and the experience of the world. From these we can discern the rights of woman and her position as an equal to man, and in no way an inferior to man.

Women themselves can contribute much to Christian reflection by laying aside the historical burden of a male-dominated theology, and evolving their own thinking from within their own consciousness of their rights as free, responsible human beings. To try to work within the old theological framework is to accept limits which cannot be too helpful. It means being caught up within a system of male superiority. It leads to the type of thinking that is likely to be satisfied with the "promotion" of the woman, when the legitimate demand is for a liberation which the dignity of every woman as a person demands.

We may find arguments for such a radical approach in St. Paul who said that in Jesus Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, male or female (Gal. 3:28), and in the Second Vatican Council which also affirmed that any discrimination based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion is contrary to God's intent (*Church in the Modern World*, Art. 29). The contradiction is between such words and the practice of the church where a woman priest, not to mention bishop or pope is still unacceptable. It is not that the priesthood is important for woman's liberation. But the insult contained in the law that women cannot be priests, bishops or pope is a counter-witness in the modern world to the dignity of the human person.

The evolution of the particular aspects of theology insofar as there are differences of sex, psychology, etc., would have to take place within the fundamental proposition of basic equality, which the modern world emphasizes. Hence it would be necessary to give up many of the traditional concepts of Christian theology concerning the woman, i.e., to demythologize the traditional Christian theology of the Christian woman—that she is a temptress, that as coming from Adam's right rib she is inferior, that she is the one who has to be only docile and passive, is meant for victimhood, compassion, patience. Such a change in theology is likely to help the Christian religion itself to get itself out of a position in which women are supposed to be more "religious" and almost as a consequence religions are regarded as more feminine.

What is required is a radical new approach to the problems of theology with reference to the sexes. The theologian has to learn from the modern world to recognize that every human being is a person and has a right

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to personal fulfillment, freedom and happiness. It would therefore follow that sex should not be a criterion of discrimination. If we argue from an example of Christ it is unfair to him because we cannot take each of his actions as guidelines for all time. In any case, if the church fails to recognize women's rights at this stage of history, it is the church that will suffer the consequences. For women will all the same go ahead towards their greater liberation.

This approach is applicable not only to the question of women's rights but to many other issues in which there is a long tradition of unfair domination of one group by another. Thus in the question of the salvation of those who are not of the Christian faith it is not of much use to engage oneself in endless theological research to try to prove that the Christian tradition is not against the salvation of those who are not Christian. For today mankind is aware that a just God will not condemn to eternal unhappiness thousands of millions of people who are not Christians for no fault of theirs. If the Christian theological tradition had no adequate answer for this problem what we have to do is begin with the assertion of the goodness of God and the rights of man and in the context of these two to critically evaluate our theology or theological tradition. Similarly for questions such as human freedom and the rights of individual conscience.

Only a radical approach to the question of the equal rights of women can help the church meet the challenge that is posed to it by the revolution of the modern world. This is one more direction in which revolutionary changes are taking place rapidly and universally. The process of rapidation itself will grow within the next few years. Unfortunately church leadership is prepared to educate and "promote" the woman, but as yet is not willing to acknowledge equal rights. This is a crisis more for the church than for enlightened women. For women will advance, and many among them may leave aside the church as incapable of understanding their deepest and best aspirations. The church has already alienated the workers, youth and intellectuals. Now it may even lose many women who have long been the mainstay of her own position.

However, the acknowledgment of the rights of woman must not to be one more paternalistic concession, nor a patchwork palliative. The church has to learn to respect human beings as made by God—male and female. The church has to grow and once again learn from the world. This is a grace for it. In its turn it can help the liberation of millions of women.

THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

A Statement by the President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin

At its Fall meeting in Washington, the Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Bishops authorized Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, President of the National Conference, to make a statement on the subject of Catholic teaching on the ordination of women. Archbishop Bernardin subsequently prepared such a statement, and it was then issued after consultation with the NCCB Executive Committee. The full text of the statement follows:

The proclamation by the United Nations of 1975 as International Women's Year was welcomed by all. It has served as a catalyst for serious discussion and action on behalf of women within both the Church and society. When the Holy Father received Mrs. Helvi Sipila, General Secretary of the International Women's Year, in November of last year, he stated that the designation of International Women's Year "does not find the Church inattentive to the problem or lacking in a clear desire to solve it. On the contrary: in the contemporary effort to promote the advancement of women in society, the Church has already recognized 'a sign of the times,' and has seen in it a call of the spirit."

The Church owes women, both religious and lay, its own great debt of gratitude for their commitment and loving service. In a special way we must also be grateful to those who today manifest their loyalty and love by pressing the question of their role in the Church.

Both candor and a sense of responsibility impel me at this time to address a question which is in the minds of many people. Discussion of the posibility of ordaining women to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church is now a lively issue in the United States.

Such discussion can contribute to a better understanding of ministry, priesthood and the role of women in the Church. But honesty and concern for the Catholic community, including those of its members who advocate the ordination of women, also require that

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Church leaders not seem to encourage unreasonable hopes and expectations, even by their silence. Therefore I am obliged to restate the Church's teaching that women are not to be ordained to the priesthood.

It is not correct to say that no serious theological obstacle stands in the way of ordaining women to the priesthood, and that the fact that women have not been ordained up to now can be explained simply by culturally conditioned notions of male superiority. There is a serious theological issue. Throughout its history the Catholic Church has not called women to the priesthood. Although many of the arguments presented in times gone by on this subject may not be defensible today, there are compelling reasons for this practice. In 1972 the NCCB Committee on Pastoral Research and Practices issued a report entitled "Theological Reflection on the Ordination of Women."

This report admitted that the question was complex and that there were aspects to it which needed further study. The report, however, gave a very powerful reason for not ordaining women:

"Revelation is made known to us from Tradition as well as from Sacred Scripture (cf. *Constitution on Divine Revelation,* #8-10). It is then necessary for theology in this question to look to the life and practice of the Spirit-guided Church. The constant practice and tradition of the Catholic Church has excluded women from the episcopal and priestly office. Theologians and canonists have been unanimous until modern times in considering this exclusion as absolute and of divine origin. Until recent times no theologian or canonist seemingly has judged this to be only of ecclesiastical law. It would be pointless to list the many authorities and the theological note that each assigns to this teaching. However, the constant tradition and practice of the Catholic Church against the ordination of women, interpreted (whenever interpreted) as of divine law, is of such a nature as to constitute a clear teaching of the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church. Though not formally defined, this is Catholic doctrine."

In commenting on this assertion, the Bishops' Committee went on to say:

"(This reason) is of ponderous theological import. Its force will not be appreciated by those who look for Revelation and theology in Scripture alone, and who do not appreciate Tradition as a source of theology. Because of (this reason) a negative answer to the possible ordination of women is indicated. The well-founded present discipline will continue to have and to hold the entire field unless and until a contrary theological development takes place, leading ultimately to a clarifying statement from the Magisterium."

It would be a mistake, I believe, to reduce the question of the ordination of women to one of injustice, as is done at times. It would be correct to do this only if ordination were a God-given right of every individual; only if somehow one's human potential could not be fulfilled without it. In fact, however, no one, male or female, can claim a "right" to ordination. And, since the episcopal and priestly office is basically a ministry of service, ordination in no way "completes" one's humanity.

It is true that the equality of women is an ideal which has yet to be fully realized in many fields, such as education, politics and employment. And it is not enough to show interest only in these areas of concern. To be faithful to the Spirit, who is at work among us, we must also address ourselves seriously to the question of women in the Church. As Pope Paul has said, "although women do not receive the call to the apostolate of the Twelve and therefore to the ordained ministries, they are none the less invited to follow Christ as disciples and co-workers." (Statement to Committee for International Women's Year, April 18, 1975; *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, May 1, 1975)

Through educational efforts of the Church, we must make sure that people are truly convinced of woman's dignity and equality, an equality whose essential foundation, as the Holy Father has reminded us, is

found in the "dignity of the human person, man and woman, in their filial relationship with God, of whom they are the visible image."

Women are called today to a greater leadership role in the Church; their contributions are needed in the decision-making process at the parochial, diocesan, national and universal levels. The Church has grown more aware of the variety of ministries open to women; in a very special way they are called to collaborate with all other segments of the Church in the essential work of evangelization. The Church will suffer, indeed it will be betrayed, if women are given only a secondary place in its life and mission.

Fortunately progress is being made in all these fields and many others. More, however, needs to be done. While this is a task of the whole Church, bishops have a special pastoral responsibility in this regard. It is not enough to make statements; our statements must be matched by actions which will bring more women into the mainstream of the life of the local Church.

I know that many will welcome this statement. But many others will disagree with and be disturbed by what

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I have said with respect to the question of ordination. The important thing now is that we not engage in recriminations; that instead we approach one another with charity and mutual respect, constantly examining our own motives—not the motives of others—in order to be as certain as is humanly possible that we are indeed at all times seeking to know and do the will of Jesus Christ.

COMMENTS ON THE BERNARDIN STATEMENT

BERNARD J. COOKE

'Seriously Disappointing'

Archbishop Bernardin's statement on the ordination of women was not really a surprise, but in many ways it was seriously disappointing. Coming almost simultaneously with Cardinal Willebrand's warning to U.S. Episcopalians that ecumenical progress would be jeopardized by granting women full liturgical ministry, Archbishop Bernardin's words seem part of an official effort to close rather than stimulate Catholic discussion of the issue.

On the surface at least, the theological judgment of the U.S. bishops on the issue of ordaining women as liturgical celebrants seems quite absolute. By situating the exclusion of women from such ministry in the area of doctrine, Archbishop Bernardin's statement does more than suggest that the bishops' view demands assent rather than discussion. At the same time, the theological justification (which, obviously, had to be streamlined because of the brevity of the document) was quite inadequate.

Perhaps, however, the Bernardin statement is not to be read as an attempt to close off the issue, but as a stimulus to careful reflection—and at least one remark in the document would seem to indicate such an intent. Very understandably, in such an event, the bishops would proceed cautiously and open the question by stressing what is presumably the traditional side of the issue, modifying this view later if subsequent discussion provided convincing theological reason for doing so. If this is what is happening, then we can assume that a serious and continuing discussion has been begun, in which case the theological superficiality of the recent statement's argumentation is inoffensive.

Let us hope that this is the genuine thrust of the statement; for if, on the contrary, the bishops' view is meant to be decisive, the document disregards the intelligence and faith of reflective U.S. Christians. Too much worthwhile has been said on the matter in the past decade, some of it by careful and respected Catholic theologians, to be dismissed in such cavalier fashion.

What the question of admitting women to full liturgical ministry demands is a thorough and open-minded study and appraisal; the matter is too basic and far-reaching to be handled in any other fashion. Part of this effort should be an empathetic listening to the insights and experience of other Christian Churches, rather than any attempt to exert pressure on them as they wrestle with the question. Part should be a scholarly examination of the theological reasons for or against ordaining women for full liturgical ministry—something that has only recently begun. An indispensable part must be the prayerful discernment (by the entire Church) of the Spirit's movement in the Church, trying to discover to which Christians, man or woman, the various charisms of ministry are being given.

Certainly, the line of theological reasoning to which the Archbishop's statement appeals — namely, "the Church has never done it, therefore . . ."—is far from being a sufficient ground. As a matter of fact, such argumentation is all too reminiscent of the reasoning that led to the disaster of *Humanae Vitae*, though the encyclical was more justified in appealing to such an argument. What we need now is frank, unprejudiced discussion, public interchange of insights and views and judgments, discussion and interchange which will involve all elements in the Church; so that together we can discover where the Spirit of God is moving us.

DOROTHY H. DONNELLY

'Static View'

I am disappointed with Archbishop Bernardin's statement because:

1) Awkward timing to issue such a sexist statement during the concluding "rites" of the International UN Year of the Woman, putting the Church squarely on the side of those who do not promote or support equality for women in spite of Pope Paul's words: "an equality before God whose essential foundation is the dignity of the human person, man and woman, in their relationship with God of whom they are the visible image." Why, then do only the *male* children have access to ordination?

2) The Archbishop's citing of tradition as a "ponderous" theological argument against such ordination seemed rather to canonize "history," and reflected a static view of tradition negating the living action of the Spirit in our own times seen in the efficacious ministries of women. "We've always done it this way" is

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not exactly heavy theological artillery. I'm afraid the Archbishop overlooks contemporary studies that insist upon the role of history as *establishing* the theological tradition of the Church, and would definitely include the present action of the Spirit in the lives of women in ministry.

3) He did not speak of how the bishops would address themselves to the necessary dialogue with women so that the "contrary theological development" he mentions could take place. Surely, the presence of bishops at the Detroit Ordination Conference would have been a sign of such brotherly co-searching for new theological insight.

I see ordination not treated in this statement as a possibly evolving, living rite capable of expressing differing meanings in differing times and places. But what the statement does do is highlight for all of us the vital need for relating a rite like ordination to its theological roots, to re-examine these, and to retheologize, aided by all the signs of the times: psychology, sociology, biology, history, etc. It is this openness which I do not sense in the report.

If ordination affirms a call to serve the community by the receiving and giving of some gift (or psychic energy) called "sharing," then I would hope that some presuppositions would operate and affect such a rite, its organic, historical development, use, and evolution:

First, relate "serving" to the reason-for-being of the Church: to proclaim the Gospel and discern the gifts in the community. Second, accept the freedom and supreme authority of the Holy Spirit in giving powers to whosoever She will, but see such gifts as given for the community, so given for a time and for a place. Such gifts are not anybody's property, nor is the ordination which would confirm gifts for serving. If the Church is to have the services of those who proclaim the message of Christ, she must discern the gifts, not repress them. Part of such discernment is done by the church of the local community which tests the server. I was struck by the absence of such theological questioning and call to such questioning in the statement. I sensed no urgency or challenge to listen to the Spirit's mighty deeds in Christian men and women.

Why, for instance, is there not more emphasis on the time-testing of candidates for ordination in real ministry *before* they are applauded and accepted in the diaconate or priestly ordination? How honest is this rite, how founded in the actuality of pastoral need and obedience to the Spirit's choice of human persons through manifesting Her powers in them?

Why not a statement calling for a high-level, dialogical, man-woman, ecumenical study of the whole question of Holy Orders? of Confirmation? of "sacrament" itself? Why not look honestly into the eyes of those who seek ordination and try to answer with them the question of the *meaning* of "priesthood" today? Why not a careful study of Jesus' revolutionary approach to service as a Rabbi who did not belong to the cultic, levitical priesthood of the Temple?

Most importantly, why not call for honest study of the shameful division between *clergy and laity* in the Church, between men and women in both Church and society, and still, between Christians in all the Churches? I would love to be challenged by our episcopal leaders to do theology in-depth on the ways to remove such scandalous *disunity* which keeps "such" from happening. Above all, I would love to see religious orders of men and women responding with vigor to that challenge, more concerned with raising the level of consciousness of our own fellow-Christians (neither clerical nor vowed) about the existence, the beauty, and the great responsibility of the gifts *they* possess for the church? In a circle of sharing of gifts, ordination would fade into its proper significance as one sacrament which could be used to confirm a particular gift for a group, and not the Holy Grail of all our striving. I'd like to see us be more selective about our sacraments. Why not use Confirmation to affirm in adult fashion and years tested gifts in local groups? What difference, then, would biological "requirements" make? But none of this did I find—nor the hint of it—and so I am disappointed, but not discouraged. Perhaps this episcopal "protesting too much" is the last purple darkness before the dawn of obedience to God's choice of human instruments unhindered by "traditional" requirements.

J. MASSYNGBERDE FORD

'Not Wholly Negative'

It would be improper to see Archbishop Bernadin's statement concerning the ordination of women in a wholly negative light. While it is true that he annunciated clearly that the *present undefined* teaching of the Church is against such ordination, he leaves room for change and development in his words "until a *contrary* theological development takes place, leading to a clarifying statement from the Magisterium" and, citing from the U.S. bishops' statement, "Theologians and canonists have been unanimous (on this issue) *until modern times* . . ."

These are encouraging words when they are seen in the light of a multiplicity of changes which have been recently implemented in the Church, changes which indeed run contrary both to the nearly 2,000 years of tradition and to some portions of Scripture. I shall list a few examples. Traditionally among those precluded from ordination to the priesthood until *very* recent times are the following: those born out of wedlock; those having a bodily defect through mutilation, blindness, deafness, inability to speak, lameness if it requires the use of a cane, the possession of a sixth finger, the adhesion of the three end fingers, epilepsy; judges who have imposed the sen-

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tence of death; members of a lynching party; slaves and *castrati*. It is possible to obtain a dispensation for many of these impediments now.

However, most interesting and most important for the ordination of women is the fact that *hermaphrodites* may be ordained if the predominant sex is male! This is discussed at considerable length by P. Heriberto Jones (*Commentarium in Codicem Iuris Canonici*, Paderborn, 1954, vol. 2, p. 182) in his observations on Canon 968 (the candidate for ordination is a baptized male). The operative sentence is 'Andragynoides cum certo sint viri, ordinum capaces existunt.' This book has the *imprimatur*. Compare also Emmanuel Doronzo, O.M.I. *De Ordine* vol. 3 *De Subjecto* (1963) which reference I have been unable to obtain. I do not wish to be facetious but rather, as I am a registered nurse as well as a theologian, I realize that this interpretation of Canon 968 is of urgent and pressing importance. Nowadays there are an increasing number of sex changes through surgery. Indeed, at the conference of the American Nurses' Association held in San Francisco in 1974 many nurses felt that this new surgery was an emotional strain upon the nurse who needed psychological guidance to assist a patient who was admitted as one sex and discharged as another. Canon lawyers, theologians and bishops may well have to face the question of a priest who changes sex after ordination. Will the removal of maleness erase the indelible character of the priesthood given to the candidate through the sacrament? It is a question which cannot be dismissed lightly.

I wish to make two last points. Firstly, Archbishop Bernardin raised the question of justice and the participants in the recent Ordination Conference reframed the issue to claim not so much the right to ordination but the right to have one's vocation tested. However, there is a far more impelling question of justice which does not revolve around the servants but those to be served. Our question must be "Is it just to deprive people of the sacraments and the message of the Gospel because we do not permit these to be ministered through a woman's hands?" There are many in the mission fields, in prisons, in hospitals, confined to their homes, etc. who cannot live a fully sacramental life because of the shortage of priests. Justice requires that we supply these people with priests. Perhaps God, our Parent, is deliberately withholding vocations from males so that in justice we shall have no alternative but to ordain women. It is only proper to make public, too, the fact that the U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate and their twelve theological consultants *unanimously* agreed that the diaconate should be restored to women. The diaconate for women is, of course, more firmly established in Scripture and Tradition than the priesthood or the episcopate.

Secondly, the greatest oversight both of the Theological Statement on Women's Ordination and of the recent Ordination Conference itself was that neither paid attention to the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is in this work, not in the Old Testament, that we find the protocol of the Christian priesthood. Briefly stated the epistle teaches us: a) where the priesthood is changed (from Levi to Melchizedek and Judah), there is of necessity a change in the law (Hebr. 7:12); b) priesthood does not depend on legal and physical qualifications (7:16); c) it is a call from God even for Christ (5:4-6); d) the ideal priest is essentially deeply human and empathetic (4:15; 5:2-3, 7-10). Indeed, a close study of Hebrews seems to suggest that the priesthood will only reflect the image and likeness of God when both masculine and feminine virtues are brought into play. May Mary who has been depicted as a priest from the fifteenth century intercede for us that we may have priesthood which is acceptable to God rather than man.

GEORGE H. TAVARD

'Ambiguous, Unconvincing'

The passages of Archbishop Bernardin's statement which deal with ordination are disastrous on several counts.

(1) The language is ambiguous. The expression, "women are not to be ordained to the priesthood," can be taken in two different senses. Does it state a fact concerning the current practice? Or does it formulate a norm for the future? In the context, the sense is not clear, as the possibility of "a contrary theological development" appears only in a quote from a committee's report, and we are not told if the Archbishop shares this openness to the future.

(2) The theological argument is unconvincing. To speak of "serious theological obstacle," "serious theological issue," "compelling reasons," without specifying what such reasons are, is not enlightening. What is called "a very powerful reason for not ordaining women" is simply a restatement of the fact that women have never been ordained to the priesthood. "Constant tradition and practice" constitute indeed a source of doctrine if the point in question belongs to the revelation. But if it pertains only to the discipline of the

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sacraments, the Church has the authority to change it, even if this particular point of discipline could be shown to derive from the Apostles. But the committee's reference to "constant tradition and practice," which is invoked here, remains studiously uncommitted on this crucial point. And the Archbishop does not explain whether this is, in his eyes, a matter of revealed and therefore unchangeable doctrine, or a matter of venerable but changeable discipline. To say that it is "The Church's teaching" does not help, for teaching can bear on discipline as well as on revelation.

(3) The statement oversimplifies the case for ordination of women, and, by so doing, it undermines its own validity. The argument is not that the traditional discipline "can be explained simply by culturally conditioned notions of male superiority." Many other cultural conditions have affected the discipline, such as the place of woman in Jewish religion, the involvement of women-priests in the pagan cults of the Roman empire, the influence of women-prophets in the Montanist movement. These are now still more irrelevant than the notion of male superiority.

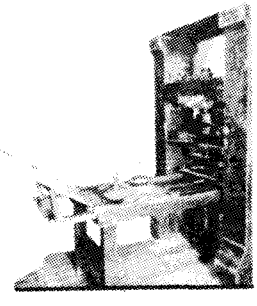
(4) By oversimplifying the opposition, the Archbishop failed to see the magnitude of the question. The theological problem is one which Vatican II began to look at but never fully faced: Do we still have a Christian anthropology? The scholastic anthropology, with which our theology and our practice of the sacraments are tied, is no longer functional. It is too remote from the contemporary sciences to be able to deal with many of the contemporary human problems. Once our theology has understood the methods and assimilated the positive results of the contemporary sciences of man, it is not at all certain that womanhood will still be considered incompatible with the sacrament of Orders and with sacerdotal functions. The problem of ordination of women, as it is now posited, requires a reformulation of the Church's understanding of what "being human" means. Denial that such a task needs to be done would amount to blindness to the major challenge that the Church faces today in all developed countries.

(5) The timing of the Archbishop's statement has been positively harmful. Coming shortly before the "Ordination Conference" of Detroit, it gave the impression of being directed against this Conference. As a result, several of the speakers defined their position and, by the same token, themselves as Christian women, in response to the Archbishop's statement. What had been conceived as a serene discussion of theology became in part an exercise in protest. Most participants being sisters, the protest that was formulated at Detroit illustrates a growing polarization between the clerical establishment and a new generation of sisters. Undoubtedly, these speakers ought not to have fallen into the trap; but the trap had been laid. Those who fell into it heightened their commitment to woman liberation, and weakened their credibility as proponents of a serious theological position. But this does not blunt the edge and cannot veil the urgency of the basic question of a Christian anthropology.

PRESS

FOR THE GANDER

THOMAS POWERS



In certain circles eighteen months ago it was an article of faith (as well as an article of impeachment) that Richard Nixon did things as President no President had ever done before. His defenders, on the other hand, few to begin with and down to a midget's handful by the time of his resignation, insisted that Nixon was being singled out unfairly by disgruntled Democrats trying to undo the disaster of 1972, and by his old nemesis and tormentor, The Press. There had been excesses, yes, these apologists conceded. No one condoned the Watergate or Ellsberg break-ins, wiretaps on journalists, the Huston domestic intelligence plan, the illegal campaign contributions. Gracious no. But nothing Nixon or his agents did was a substantial departure from previous practice. Impeachment was a grossly excessive response to what amounted to Standard Operating Procedure in a Washington grown cynical with power and the ease of secrecy.

One of those defenders was William Safire, a Nixon speechwriter who left the White House to write a column for the *New York Times*. Like most other Nixon loyalists Safire eventually admitted the truth of the charges—what else could he do?—but he argued that a double standard of morality was at work. Investigating committees in a Congress dominated by Democrats overlooked the Watergate-style excesses of Kennedy and Johnson, and the Press pursued Nixon personally—for fiddling his taxes, for letting his wife keep jewels which were more properly gifts to the state, for accepting campaign contributions which were all but indistinguishable from bribes (but not, oddly, for personally ordering the secret bombing of Cambodia)—with a venom and energy entirely lacking where other political figures were concerned. Safire was saying, in effect, that Congress and the Press went after Nixon not from principled alarm about Freedom, the Bill

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of Rights, the Democratic Process, etc. etc., but for a simpler reason. They didn't like him.

Nixon, of course, eventually retired to San Clemente but Safire has continued to argue his case, focusing most recently on current House and Senate investigations of the intelligence community headed by Rep. Otis Pike and Sen. Frank Church. Four columns in the last month alone have cited fudged investigations into the 1961-62 wiretaps of Hanson Baldwin of the *Times* and Lloyd Norman of *Newsweek* authorized by Robert F. Kennedy, the wiretaps of Martin Luther King authorized by Kennedy and Nicholas Katzenbach, the bugging of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party at the Democratic convention in Atlantic City in 1964, and, most recently, the Church committee's gingerly treatment of John F. Kennedy's "friendship" with a woman who was also the "friend" of two Chicago Mafia leaders, Sam Giancana and John Rosselli. Giancana and Rosselli were also, perhaps not so coincidentally, the CIA's chosen agents in one of many schemes to murder Fidel Castro, and it was apparently J. Edgar Hoover's discovery of this odd triangle which brought it to an end. This left Hoover in possession, not at *all* coincidentally, one suspects, of just about the most compromising and politically lethal bit of information he can ever have obtained during his long career. We are permitted to hope so, at any rate.

The Church committee's official report mentioned Kennedy's "friend" without even identifying her sex. Safire naturally wonders what would have happened if Nixon had been surprised* in similar circumstances? He would like to know why these revelations have been so slow in coming? so calmly accepted, once public? Why has so much been left unasked of so many? Where are the special prosecutors? the outraged editorialists and investigative reporters? Safire says they're all home watching late-night movies on television because they don't have Nixon to kick around anymore. Is Safire right?

Yes, Safire is right. There is simply no other way to explain the extraordinary public feeling which was aroused by and in turn sustained the Watergate investigations, and which has been feeble at best during the investigations of the Church committee. After nearly a year of work there are still loose ends enough to stuff a mattress.

In fairness, we must admit that Church was weak in a way that Sam Ervin, Archibald Cox, John Sirica and Leon Jaworski were not. They were sustained by the squall of public feeling which Safire found so partisan and so unfair. When Church ran up against a stonewall, he did not have a groundswell of public opinion to lift him up and over it. Partly this is the fault of a passive press, which seemed to drop the issue just as Church picked it up, and which gave little space to the testimony and interim reports produced by the Church committee. Just remember for a moment the endless pages of tape transcripts during Watergate, the dozens of memos, the verbatim testimony of witnesses before the Ervin committee. Church was left pretty much on his own, but we must also recognize that he never tried to force the issue, to summon up public feeling or to protest its absence. He refused to give evidence to the Justice Department, he declined to televise hearings, he avoided court fights for evidence, he interpreted his mandate in a narrow way. Church did not go down fighting. He simply did not fight at all.

The dismaying thing about this faint performance is that so few people have protested, or even seemed to care. Watergate wasn't so long ago that I have forgotten the way people talked about it at the time: obsessively, almost without interruption for a year and a half, with passion and an appetite for the details. Watergate was one of those subjects which could strain families or sour dinner parties, in its early stages at any rate, when the facts could still be argued. No one has talked about the Church committee or the assassination report that way. People were upset by it, but they didn't dwell on it, and for the most part they didn't question it. At every stage of Watergate the public was intensely —at times even loonily—suspicious of the motives, energy and integrity of every investigating body. But who questioned the Church committee?

I remember in particular an evening at the height of Watergate when Nixon gave one of his last televised speeches insisting he was innocent. At the end of the speech Roger Mudd asked Dan Rather for his reaction, and Rather ticked off the distortions and omissions: this ignored, that in blatant contradiction to the record, some other claim twisted out of shape. It was not mean or unfair; it was cold and factual, just as it should have been. Rather had been paying attention to the facts—close attention, *meticulous* attention—and Nixon was trying to weave around, over, under and through them. All Rather did was to chart his course.

No one paid that sort of attention to the Church committee, even though the crimes involved there—at the very least, conspiracy to commit murder—were of far greater substance than the corruption charged against Nixon. Did no one care? Did no one think it important?

I can hardly believe either is the case, and yet the press remained solemnly silent when Church said he had gone as far as he could go. Just take one instance. The CIA admitted plotting to poison Patrice Lumumba. Lumumba was in fact murdered. The Church committee —and countless press reports echoing the committee—said there was no evidence the CIA had been involved. Somebody else—I saw one report which said simply, "other enemies"—killed Lumumba. I don't know about

*It is said that Samuel Johnson's wife once opened a pantry door and found her husband with a maid of the house. "Doctor Johnson!" she said; "I am surprised!" "No, my dear," said Johnson. "You are astonished, *I* am surprised."

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you, but that sounds pretty lame to me, and yet I have not seen one article about Lumumba's actual murder, not one attempt to establish who did kill him.

In much the same tone of voice the Church committee said it could not link any assassination conspiracy to any President. The Presidents in question *ought* to have known, but they didn't, or at least we don't know that they did. In this instance, at least, there was one note of dissent. Richard J. Walton, on the Op-Ed page of the *Times*, made a forceful argument that *of course* Kennedy knew about the attempts to kill Castro. It was simply willful innocence to suppose anything else. A President may be expected to ignore only what is peripheral or routine, and no one has suggested that assassination was so accepted, so automatic and frequent that a President would pay it no more attention than he would a press release from the New Orleans regional office of HEW. And yet Walton, so far, has been the only one to raise the obvious protest. The rest of the press has been busy with larger questions, like Howard ("Bo") Calloway's attack on Reagan, and which Boy Scout on a dark horse the Democrats will choose to run this year.

So Safire, it seems to me, is right. A double standard of sorts *has* been at work, Nixon *was* singled out, Republicans are arrested for speeding while Democrats get away with murder, and Watergate was less a national catharsis, than a vendetta. But in another sense, Safire is wrong. Or at least he is missing what seems to me to be the point. Safire shows every sign of wanting to drag Kennedy and Johnson henchmen out of the woodpile and to put them up against the courtroom wall along with Haldeman, Ehrlichman and the rest. He wants to wipe off smug Democratic grins, watch the sweat break out on Democratic brows, see Democrats standing before the bench, holding up their trousers, as a black-robed judge hands out prison sentences. In short, Safire would like to even the score. But he is not, or at least does not seem to be, very much interested in . . . the truth.

The real tragedy of the Church committee is not the fact that its chairman has been guilty of partisan prejudice, attacking his enemies and sparing his friends, but that he has been so cool to the truth. It is not that he has failed to collect and publish a lot of information—he has done that, at least—but that in the final analysis, faced with crimes which far exceed those of Watergate, Church has been one of those who *don't want to know.*

The image of the Church committee which sticks with me—far more vividly than Ehrlichman's curled lip during the Watergate hearings, or Mitchell's phlegmatic denials, or Nixon's claim that "I am not a crook"—is Church, holding up an electrically-operated dart gun, a "nondiscernible microbinoculator," and accepting William Colby's bland assurance that because records are so *spotty* he just can't say for *sure* whether or not that gun was ever actually *used*, don't you know.

Church investigated assassination plots against Castro, Lumumba, Trujillo, Diem and the Chilean General Rene Schneider. Four of the five were, in fact, murdered. *But the CIA didn't do it.* It refined enough shellfish toxin to kill 30,000 people, not to mention at least 19 other substances (including cobra venom) which could kill or incapacitate. *But none of them was ever used.* Fountain pens, canes and umbrellas were all manufactured to shoot poison darts. *But none of them was ever used.* The CIA designed a bolt for a car's engine block which would heat and release lethal fumes. *It was never used.* It designed a fluorescent light which would do the same thing. *It was never used.* God knows what other malicious toys the CIA created. *They were never used. Nothing ever happened. It was all talk.*

In boxing this is called taking a fall. Church might have asked if any agent or employee of the CIA had ever killed anyone, under any circumstances, for any reason? He might have said, "Give us a list; *we'll* decide if such cases were murder or not." But he didn't ask, just as he left open so many other questions—the FBI's 238 break-ins, the endless wiretapping, mail-opening, lying before Congress—for one simple and basic reason: He didn't want to know.

In writing about the CIA there is an all but irresistible tendency to dwell on its "crimes," as if the point in any investigation were only to find and punish the wrongdoers. I'm not quite sure why this is so; perhaps it's the Cromwell in us. Whatever the explanation, the tendency is misdirected. The thing for which I fault Church is not that he goes easy on the villains, but that he cannot let them off without failing to uncover what they did. The result has been an investigation which conceals as much as it reveals. We know the CIA has been up to no good, and everyone involved swears they're going to be on the up-and-up from now on, yessir, but there is something specious in such assurances when they are based of necessity on a private agreement not to know exactly what it is we're not going to do any more. I'm not surprised Colby is content with this state of affairs; and I'm disappointed but not too surprised that Church is at least willing to live with it, but, like Safire, I can't see any good reason why the press should go along. Reasons, alas, yet, of an old and familiar sort, but not good ones.

THOMAS POWERS

AN APPEAL—A large social center in Madras is providing "means for the able-bodied to help themselves." It conducts a 750-pupil day school and several night schools for the poor, a 60-machine sewing project for Burmese refugees, a typewriting and secretarial course—and a wide range of workshops for the handicapped. It also provides 3,500 meals a day. Donations should be sent to Salesian Missions, Box 30, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10802, or directly to Beatitudes Social Welfare Centre, 193-A Sundaramudaly St., Madras 600039, India (Airmail 31¢).

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THE HISTORIAN'S HEROD

PETER STEINFELS

KING HEROD, dear reader, has been misunderstood. The Massacre of the Innocents is folklore. "The real problem raised by the career of Herod" is how a small country manages to retain some independence under the shadow of a super-power. Insofar as he could, Herod achieved this aim brilliantly. "While he lived, he did very great things for Romans, Greeks and Jews alike."

This is not the ironic comment of a writer attempting to reduce *realpolitik* to absurdity by summoning it to justify one of the culture's exemplars of villainy. It is the sober judgment of a respected historian, Michael Grant, in the volume *Herod the Great*.

Virtually everything I know about the historical Herod comes from Grant's book. Others might quarrel with his scholarship; obviously I could not. But historical facts do not emerge and align themselves of their own accord; they require selection, emphasis, interpretation, orchestration. And the strongest impression made on me by Grant's portrait of Herod was that, like Auden's rendition in *For the Time Being*, it reveals more about our own sorry standards of greatness, our own rationalizations for domination and violence, than about true, even this-worldly, achievement.

Certainly it took a strong and shrewd personality to obtain and retain power in the Judea of Herod's day. Like a ricocheting pinball, Herod bounced through the intrigues of the Middle East and the Roman empire, a pro-Roman contender of Arab descent for a Jewish kingship! He zigzagged from Caesar to Cassius to Antony to Augustus, from Galilee to Rome to Jerusalem, moved not by chance but by cunning, ruthlessness, audacity, perseverance, and when circumstances demanded, obsequiousness. At each moment when civil war or the fall of a patron was about to drop Herod into oblivion, he scored again; the lights of his reign kept flashing for a third of a century.

During this time Herod expanded the borders of Judea, built new cities, restored and enlarged the Temple, and dotted Jerusalem and the country with royal buildings. "Apart from small groups of ruined noblemen and Messianic extremists," writes Michael Grant, "the Jews had never had it so good. The ordinary peasants, merchants and citizenry were prospering, and knew it, and Herod's mighty public works had given full employment and had eliminated social agitation. When complaints against Herod broke out after his death, his friend Nicolaus of Damascus was quick to point out that there had been little sign of them while he was alive."

Our ears perk up. Is there a familiar ring to that summary? Is it not the apologia repeated on behalf of almost every modern dictatorship? That complaints against Herod went unvoiced during his lifetime does not appear surprising. According to Josephus, chronicler of Herod's age, "No meeting of citizens was allowed, nor were walking together or being together allowed, and their movements were observed." Grant adds that on the open roads as well as in the cities, "there were hosts of men spying upon any and every social encounter." For such regimes spies are only the antennae of terror. Purges were a regular necessity. Over half the members of the Jewish Council were disposed of. Beneath and within every bed lurked a family conspiracy—marrying ten times didn't help. Besides executing for treason his second wife Mariamme, whom he loved jealously, and her mother, brother, and grandfather; besides killing the wife of one of his brothers, two husbands of his sister, and numerous other members of his household, Herod had two of his own sons strangled, and finally on his deathbed ordered the slaying of his firstborn. The leaders of student demonstrations were burnt alive. Messianic beliefs had to be mercilessly stamped out. If the Massacre of the Innocents is legend, it is not for want of willingness on Herod's part.

Was Herod's cruelty a tolerable price, by ancient and perhaps modern standards too, for his politics of survival? Grant, in effect, says yes. But what sort of survival had Herod in mind for Judea? Herod was a Hellenizer, not merely out of tactical compromise with the conqueror's ideology, but out of personal enthusiasm. Formally he was a Jew, but as Martin Noth points out in *The History of Israel*, he was "fundamentally a Hellenistic pagan ruler." "Herod," Michael Grant agrees, "was truly eager to integrate Judaism and Jewry with the surrounding world."

Was his failure really a failure for Judaism and Jewry, which despite dispersion and holocaust lives on, while the Roman empire and its satellite kingdoms, prosperous or not, have evaporated into the memories of our culture? Only the modern secular mind, the mind of *realpolitik* and cost-benefit analysis, can so totally underestimate the realities of integrity, of sacrifice, death, and rebirth. Only that mind could write, as Grant does, that Herod "achieved as much greatness as was possible for any man of his time who was not a Roman." Even measuring in units of this-worldly impact, one would have thought of that figure who was the object of Herod's alleged search-and-destroy mission. But he was a "Messianic extremist," I suppose; and was executed in an insignificant episode during the reign as tetrarch of Herod's son Antipas, after preaching a doctrine which will always be baffling to those we name "the Great."

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THE SCREEN

Joseph Losey's *The Romantic Englishwoman* begins with a shot of its title character, Elizabeth (Glenda Jackson), reflected in the window of a train. Though we don't know then that the train is taking her to the resort of Baden-Baden, and that she has left her husband to go there, we can tell that she is in an uncertain, vague and troubled state. Indeed, from this opening shot we have a more forceful impression even than that. As the reflection superimposes her on the scenery outside the train, Elizabeth appears to us as an apparition. Floating pale and undisturbed over the hurtling landscape, she is so indistinct and dislocated a figure that she at once becomes a woman of mystery. It is a shot which makes us understand right from the start that we are not going to know what to make of this woman.

It is also not the only time in the film's opening sequences that Elizabeth appears to us as an illusion, a mere figment. As she is on her way to Baden-Baden, her novelist husband Lewis (Michael Caine) is home in London wondering what she's up to. What he imagines is her having at it in an elevator with some gigolo of the type that women go to Baden-Baden to acquire. The faceless man caresses her throat, her leg emerges from beneath her evening gown, etc. While Lewis torments himself over and over with this fantasy, Elizabeth's real activities remain obscured from our view. She does in fact take up with a gigolo, Thomas (Helmut Berger), and he does make a move for her when he gets her alone in a hotel elevator. But Losey only gives us a receding glimpse of what transpires between them, the camera fixed atop the elevator shaft and peering down through the grillwork in the roof of the car as the car descends out of sight.

However enigmatic Elizabeth may remain for us, though, we do begin to understand something of the world in which she lives. It is a world in which people's illusions about each other obstruct our view of their reality, and in which their illusions about themselves eclipse reality the way Elizabeth's wavering reflection in the train window eclipses the landscape outside. This world so embroiled in its own fantasies, the world of a best-selling writer like Lewis, is one that Losey knows well. (One of Lewis's friends is a film director played by a Losey look-alike.) And Losey knows that in this elegant, monied world, an interloper like Thomas is himself an illusion. Thomas is a shady character, a reckless opportunist who sometimes smuggles heroin when he is in between women. Such people exist in Lewis and Elizabeth's world—and Losey's—the way a character might exist in one of Lewis's novels, as a romantic fantasy not really to be believed. As surely as Thomas's affair with Elizabeth is a figment of Lewis's imagination, Thomas himself is in this movie a mere figment of Lewis and Elizabeth's marriage. He is like a demon who enters their lives solely to embody their own malaise and discontent, and Losey treats him accordingly.

What Losey does is to make Thomas's life into a strange shadow, or at times a foreshadowing, of Lewis and Elizabeth's life. When he arrives at Baden-Baden, for instance, Thomas eats off a serving cart in the hotel park a meal he has stolen from room service, and in a way this fugitive meal anticipates something that happens when Elizabeth returns home to Lewis several scenes later. Finding Lewis out on her return, Elizabeth waits for him that night in the side yard and seduces him right then and there before he can even get her back into the house. The point of the parallel Losey creates between the two scenes is that Elizabeth seems to yearn for the sort of precariousness and insecurity that Thomas's life represents. Thomas's appeal is that he is a perpetual outsider, as that eating scene in the park suggests. And as in the reflection of her in the train window, which serves as an establishing shot for Losey's whole film, so in the scene where she tries to seduce Lewis, Elizabeth herself becomes literally (or rather, figuratively) an outsider as well.

Thomas embodies that impulse to throw one's responsibilities, or somebody else's, out the window. This is precisely what keeps happening, too, when Thomas shows up on Lewis and Elizabeth's doorstep as an uninvited house guest. He is there because he threw his own responsibilities out a window, carelessly stashing heroin he was transporting outside a window of the hotel in Baden-Baden so that it washed away in a storm. Now the gangsters are after him. But it is Lewis's career, not his own, that Losey has brought Thomas to this house to throw out. Thinking to ingratiate himself with flattery, Thomas buys one of Lewis's novels en route to England; but then he becomes so impatient with it, he throws it out a train window before he arrives. Soon his demonic presence in Elizabeth's home has her doing the same thing, tossing Lewis's current manuscript out the window of his garret study into the rain like Thomas's heroin.

Finally, however, Lewis and Elizabeth's marriage has about it a kind of harmony and balance that restore themselves. It has a symmetry like that which exists in a mirror image between the subject and its reflection in the glass. All the exchanges between Lewis's life and Elizabeth's, between inside and outside, illusion and reality, come together in the film when Lewis's jealous fantasy about his wife and Thomas at last comes true. Despite the obvious disingenuousness of Thomas's flattery, Lewis is even more readily and completely seduced by him than Elizabeth was, and it is at Lewis's insistence that Thomas stays on in their home for a prolonged visit. Thomas's mere presence therefore fulfills a kind of sym-

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metrical pattern in Lewis and Elizabeth's relationship.

When Thomas does try to make love to Elizabeth, the incident realizes and yet also mirror-images Lewis's fantasy. It occurs not in Baden-Baden in a hotel elevator, but at Lewis's own home, and outside, in a greenhouse in the middle of the lawn where Elizabeth tried to make love to Lewis earlier. But the cage-like similarity of the elevator and the greenhouse gives us a strong sense of *déjà vu*. Thomas caresses her throat just as in Lewis's fantasy, her leg wriggles out from under her gown, and her face assumes an erotic expression the same as that in a photograph Lewis has by his writing desk upstairs. Now it is Lewis who is in an abstracted and apparitional state, for as he peers down at his wife and her lover, we see only his face reflected in his study window like hers in the train at the beginning. Events have come full circle now, and despite the infidelity that is about to occur before Lewis's eyes, the peculiar symmetry of his life with Elizabeth has been restored. The situation is turn-about, and turn-about is fair play in their world. Whatever recrimination or further jealousy may follow, we see that Thomas is what Losey has presented him to be: a passing fancy. Lewis and Elizabeth must get back together again in the end. COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

AN UNGENTLE GENTLEMAN

BERNARD McCABE

Evelyn Waugh: A Biography

CHRISTOPHER SYKES

Little, Brown, $12.50

"You have no idea," he said, "how much nastier I would be if I was not a Catholic. Without supernatural aid I would hardly be a human being." But Catholicism did not help much; it probably only intensified Evelyn Waugh's self-hatred and self-disgust. And he was often very nasty indeed. Anecdotes about him have been circulating for years, especially in Catholic circles, but the most startling revelations came in the spring of 1973 when the London *Observer* published extracts from his private diaries, and Waugh emerged as an extraordinarily rancorous and vindictive figure. Christopher Sykes's biography does little to relieve this impression. Waugh was a bully; he was, Sykes tells us, "horribly adept at putting people he met ill at ease as regards their social manners and position," and he enjoyed doing it: "To the naturally weak he was as merciless as he had been in his bullying schooldays." He was a snob who, for example, as an army officer had to be kept away from the men because of his habit of showing open contempt for them. "He never hesitated to take advantage of the fact that while he was a highly educated man, most of them were barely literate." He was a choleric man: "never," says Sykes of one occasion, "have I seen envy, hate and rage so effortlessly conjoined in a human face."

And he went in for seemingly quite gratuitous unkindnesses. Here is the anecdote most likely to be generally remembered: an American woman, wife of a well-known theatrical producer, addresses him at a dinner party as follows: "Oh Mr. Waugh, I have just been reading your new book, *Brideshead Revisited*, and I think it's one of the best books I have ever read." To which Waugh replies: "I thought it was good myself, but now that I know that a vulgar, common American woman like yourself admires it, I am not so sure." (We are appalled of course, and perhaps also, *hypocrites lecteurs*, secretly delighted.) No doubt he was drunk at the time; he often was. But the impulse towards self-destructive aggression — nastiness — seems to have been quite uncontrollable.

Sykes gives us all that to contemplate. We also have Waugh on politics. Here it is not so much the pro-Franco stance in the Spanish Civil War that offends (after all most Catholics took this position in the thirties). Nor is it the antipathy (shared by Sykes) towards doctrinaire Left-wing ideologues in England. His Belloc-style view of the Freemasons as the sinister force behind the Mexican revolution could be tolerated as an eccentricity, and his admiration for Spanish-Colonial rule in Central America can be taken as a quirk. But his account of Italian intervention in Abyssinia—civilized Romans enlightening the savages—and his insistent praise for Marshal Graziani, notorious for his atrocities in that country, an admiration that persisted beyond the end of the Second World War when all the facts were available—this seems perverse and ugly. Rose Macaulay was surely right in calling his thirties travel-book, *Waugh in Abyssinia*, a "fascist tract."

Yet once there had been another view of Evelyn Waugh. At school he had been a delicate draughtsman and had first wanted to pursue a *fin-de-siècle* sort of career in calligraphy and illustration. As late as 1930 he published a biography of the Pre-Raphaelite, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. At Oxford in the twenties, he had fallen in with the clever, witty, bourgeoisie-defying, anarchic group of aesthetes who bor-

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rowed their attitudes and life-styles from France and *avant-garde* Europe —flamboyant figures like Brian Howard and Harold Acton (both from cosmopolitan Catholic backgrounds) with their host of followers and imitators, who made the amoral aesthete's life exciting and glamorous. Waugh was immediately welcome in this world; he basked in its delights, and it was Acton who first sponsored him and his work. Here is the latter's (not of course totally unmalicious) picture of Evelyn Waugh at that time: "A little faun called Evelyn Waugh. . . . I see him as a prancing faun, his wide-apart eyes, always ready to be startled, under raised eyebrows, the curved sensual lips, the hyacinthine locks of hair, I had seen in marble and bronze at Naples, in the Vatican museum, and on fountain heads all over Italy."

Surely this prancing faun is the figure most evidently behind *Decline and Fall, Vile Bodies, Black Mischief, Scoop, Put Out More Flags,* novels in which wonderfully outrageous, anarchic comic fantasy is allowed free play in a brilliant glassy prose. These books seem to be fine satiric achievements; but it is not easy to talk about them as satires. Most satirists are, like Waugh, conservatives; but then, unlike him, they turn out to be Appollonian as well, moral celebrators of an established order. Waugh might at first seem to belong to this company; his preferred protagonist is a "civilised" victim at bay among contemporary "savages," and he certainly cultivated the image of himself as *laudator temporis acti* and the rest of it. But the tales betray him; Waugh the artist is happiest as a gay, Dionysian celebrator of comic anarchy, in the world of such free puppets as Margot Beste-Chetwynde and Miles Malpractice, or, an interesting variant, of Basil Seal.

The left-wing British novelist and essayist J. B. Priestley, a declared enemy of Waugh, once suggested that he was "an author pretending to be a Catholic landed gentleman." And Sykes tells us that in real life Waugh wanted to belong to the world of Tony Last (the victim-hero of *A Handful of Dust*), the dowdy upper-class world of English gentry, but that in fact he never much liked country life, was bored by it, and instinctively felt more at home chez Lady Metroland, i.e., in the anarchic, reality-denying universe of the smart and witty aesthetes. The truth is surely more complicated, though Sykes never seems to get down to dealing with it, beyond remarking upon it. The whole country-squire business seems to have been a sort of game. Waugh made a *Black-Mischief* style joke out of it, often getting himself up in grotesquely exaggerated versions of the "correct" clothes, making himself into a *pastiche* reactionary, and mooching about in an elegant country-house stuffed with mid-Victorian *bric-a-brac*. (Paul Claudel met him once and afterwards made the accurate, though hopelessly French comment: *"il lui manque l'allure d'un vrai gentleman."*)

A quick explanation of Waugh's misanthropy might be made in terms of his dissatisfaction with this chosen role, and all the rejections that it implied. Yet the dissatisfaction was valuable to the writer; an important dynamic of these novels is a struggle within Waugh between the anarchic aesthete that he had been, and the authoritarian conservative that he was becoming. Some version of this struggle appears in most of his fiction, sometimes wonderfully transmuted in his comic imagination, as in *Put Out More Flags*, where the homosexual aesthete, Ambrose Silk becomes the civilized victim of the heterosexual philistine Basil Seal. The latter (a country-house habitué) seems to win the battle hands-down, yet Waugh leaves the air full of ambiguities. Sykes here, as everywhere else in his biography, confidently names the models Waugh used: Ambrose is largely based on the aesthete Harold Acton, Basil on the man-of-action Peter Rodd. No doubt Sykes is right, up to a point (as Lord Copper's employees at the *Daily Beast* memorably say), but these figures become more interesting and certainly more significant if they are seen as embodiments of warring impulses in Waugh himself.

Waugh's fiction goes most seriously wrong when this exteriorized inward battle is too easily won, and when we are offered, not an outrageous iconoclastic victor like Basil Seal, but a victim-hero like Guy Crouchback. The most "Catholic" of the novels, *Brideshead Revisited* and the war-trilogy, *Sword of Honor* suffer in this way. Apart from the stiff, uneasy love-stories each one tells (that is another matter) the difficulty stems from Waugh's willed, unreal evocations of aristocratic new-Catholicism among the Marchmains and aristocratic old-Catholicism among the Crouchbacks as a center of value. Significantly enough, Waugh's meticulously disciplined prose deserts him in these situations and a lush unfamiliar language creeps in. *Bridgeshead*, accomplished as ever when it tells the story of Sebastian Flyte and Anthony Blanche and evokes the Oxford aesthete's world again, seems to me preposterous when it is trying to do what Waugh thought it was doing: demonstrating "the operation of divine grace." *Sword of Honour*, intermittently brilliant and sometimes moving in its anarchic vision of war's ineptitudes and ironies, is dangerously undermined by the author's fond, uncritical dwelling upon his romanticized oldest of English Catholic families.

A good biography of Waugh should probe some of these tensions. But Sykes does not attempt such things. He was a close friend and confidant and he has had access to all Waugh's private journals. But in a sense he knows too much and so, paradoxically, cannot tell us enough. He knows what he knows in the wrong way. He has no distance and, worse, no critical edge to bring to bear upon the man or the work. As an official, authorized biographer he seems overwhelmed by the need for discretion; so, despite all those scandalous anecdotes, there is a stultifying atmosphere of hints, and nudges to read between the lines. Sykes is, reasonably and rightly, inhibited by loyalties to the living, and perhaps as a result at least two subjects that have endless resonances in the fiction are

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quite inadequately treated: one is the breakdown of Waugh's first marriage —a family-and-friends account only is furnished; the other is his active homosexuality as a young man—the topic and its implications are quite startlingly introduced, but then simply disappear from consideration. We are also left in the dark about his Graham Greene-like youthful attempt at suicide, and questions about his conversion to Catholicism ("little can be known") get only a dusty answer.

This biography is simply premature. But of course it has to be read, if only for the richly comic anecdotes, often very well told. Here is Christopher Sykes at his curious best, catching convincingly the tone of his own relationship wtih Waugh, and also offering a quick glimpse of that serio-comic clubman at work on his image. The story takes place in the dark, clothes-rationed days immediately after the war.

> One day, looking through my half-forgotten wardrobe I came across a rather dandyish piece, a grey bowler hat. With a dark grey suit I found this rather becoming, and thus clad I went to White's. Sitting on the leather-seated fender, glaring at every member who came in, was Evelyn. He lept to his feet on my entrance, his eyes blazing and haggard with that concentrated look of jealousy I remembered from Tatton Park. "Give me that hat!" he cried.
>
> I refused, saying it was a hat I valued and loved.
>
> "Where did you get it?"
>
> I told him that it came from Lock's in St. James's Street. The same day Evelyn went to Lock's shop who in due time sent him from their stores 'one white Coke hat.' This he wore frequently from then on, not only in summer for which such hats are designed, but at all seasons.
>
> A grey bowler hat worn with the right sort of clothes can have dignity, but not when worn with the sort of suit Evelyn ordered shortly after.

Sykes's manner is pure Wodehouse, that is to say, very stylish English Public School-boy prose. In his later years, Waugh admired Wodehouse extravagantly, in itself an interesting development in a serious novelist.

Gratitude to an author who has given endless pleasure makes me want to urge Waugh's redeeming qualities. First, one cannot ignore the implications of what Sykes rightly calls a "ruthless and superb" essay in self-criticism that Waugh offers in the first chapter of *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. Waugh knew and judged himself. More positively, Sykes presents him as a devoted husband and the loving father of a large family. And he also quotes convincing examples of Waugh's unobtrusive good works, notably his generous and affectionate efforts to rehabilitate the alcoholic Alfred Duggan, who with his help became a successful novelist. Again, unattractive though most of his political views were, one admires in retrospect Waugh's honorable struggle to draw attention to British acquiescence in the persecution of Croatian Catholics under Tito during the complex years immediately after World War II. We can also admire Waugh's wholehearted devotion to his own vocation as a writer. Finally, he was a man of simple piety.

So he did have various virtues, but it is the misanthropic Waugh who sticks in the mind. "The tiny kindling of charity which came to him [Pinfold] through his religion sufficed only to temper his disgust and change it to boredom." When those *Observer* extracts came out, an arresting photograph of the novelist in his last years stared from the covers of the magazine section. I look back at the picture Sykes prints of Waugh in his twenties, a young man astride of motor-bike, gay and insouciant, his faun-like face glancing from under the hyachinthine locks. And then back to what Waugh forty years later had made of himself in that other photograph. It's a Dorian Gray effect—a face destroyed; that self-assertive, apoplectic, blood-shot mask angrily glaring—but with terrible misery in the eyes.

BOOKS

AN EAR TO AMERICA

THOMAS LeCLAIR

J R

WILLIAM GADDIS

Knopf, $15 ($5.95 paper)

Ralph Ellison's second novel should be along sometime soon. The signs are good. Woiwode and Heller have published their "long-awaited" books in the last year or so. Now comes William Gaddis's *J R*, twenty years after *The Recognitions*. Although *The Recognitions* is as important as any American novel published in the last thirty years, 1955 reviewers were largely unsympathetic to its massive ambition, learning, and innovation. Gaddis was silent, became apocryphal. It was rumored that he was Joyce alive in America or, more recently, Thomas Pynchon as a young man.

J R proves Gaddis has been here all along—listening to America talk, listening to life become information, art become publicity, words become waste. Listen to the cause, the novel's first line: "—Money . . .? in a voice

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that rustled." In Gaddis's America money metastasizes from business into education and the arts, poisons all relations, smears all clarity. Even sunlight is "pocketed" in a cloud.

Gaddis attacks the business of America with Poundian bitterness and an updated version of Heller's Milo Minderbinder world. The novel itself is a conglomerate: congeries of lives, forces, goods, and information so multiple, yet interlocked, that the reader enters it as he would the ITT annual report—with suspicion and trepidation. Forty characters, an equal number of companies or products, a geometrical progression of connections, and maniacal quick-cutting produce a complex formula made intelligible only by its lowest common denominator: money.

The novel opens with an old-fashioned family squabble over control of inherited stock, but this small-change disturbance soon involves principals and reader in the web of modern big business. At the center is "Black Jack" Cates, archetypal robber baron, manipulator, and mechanical man. Vibrating another filament is J. R. Vansant, a hot newcomer who parlays some Army surplus forks into a bothersome little empire that includes a brewery (cobalt produces the beer's amazing head; J. R. claims a mineral depletion allowance), a drug company-nursing home-funeral parlor-cemetery arrangement, some R and D in teleportation and freeze-dried sound, and a dollar sign logo.

Cates never knows that J. R. is an eleven-year-old boy who got his start from free information he picked up on a school tour of Cates's company. Horatio Alger, phantom competitor, and contemporary personification of Alberich in Wagner's *Rheingold*, J. R. is a marvelously malicious parody of the American success story. A mirror to his environment, he becomes as venal as Cates, and even after federal agencies disband his eccentric holdings J. R. remains dedicated to the romance of business.

As J. R.'s corporation grows, Gaddis entangles it with other filaments: a school system committed to patriotism, kickbacks, hardware, ignorance, and its "custodial" function; crooked politicians and military men; lackey executives, brokers, and lawyers; and the artists victimized by what Gaddis calls a "shoot the pianist" culture. A writer kills himself, a painter sells blood to buy paints, a composer writes schlock for promotional films. No one heeds Aristotle's and Gaddis's reproach: "to be always seeking after the useful does not become free and exalted souls." Here exaltation is expensive and not even junk is free.

The problem, says writer Jack Gibbs

> *. . . newspaper's full of opportunities. Here. Monogrammed doormat sixteen ninety-five . . . Earn your respect making monogrammed doormats how's that.*
>
> *—Jack honestly if you can't simply . . .*
>
> *—No no listen look, first time in history so many opportunities to do so God damned many things not worth doing, problem's they start with the sixteen ninety-five have to start with the doormat, went to the woods to live deliberately Thoreau says couldn't escape from the Protestant ethic, be the first ones to redeem it Amy making monogrammed doormats deliberately. . . .* —J.R.

(named after Josiah Gibbs of the "Gibbs free energy function"), is entropy, thermodynamic and informational. Energy is unavailable for artists' work because they receive no support. And although America invented information science, communication, with business as its paradigm, is accidental and meaning leaks from language. As Pound put it in *The Cantos*: "with usury the line grows thick."

Embarrassingly acute, relentlessly inventive, as chaotically funny as *Catch-22*, as comprehensively satirical as *Giles Goat-Boy*, and a good bet for a National Book Award if that too has not succumbed to cultural entropy, *J R* is nearly as large (726 pages)—but not as profound—as *The Recognitions*. Ironically, Gaddis's twenty years without recognition may account for the weaknesses of *J R*. Gaddis quotes from the reviews of *The Recognitions* in *J R* and suggests that commercialism robbed him of his place in letters. So he goes after big business and its babble. But they are a monstrous tarbaby, and I think Gaddis signals this in the novel.

To be worthy of its enemy, *J R* had to be massive, inclusive, long in preparation. But meanwhile other novelists and public knowledge have engaged the enemy. As Gibbs says of *his* long-delayed book on commerce and art: "nobody gives a God damn book everything's happened book about everybody knows hate it!"

A more serious problem—but also a major source of the novel's interest—is Gaddis's constructing it almost wholly out of talk. He has a writer named Eigen (German for "ownself") experience the insistent garbled voices of America: "everything around him getting so God damned real he couldn't see straight long enough to write a sentence." Instead of "writing sentences," Gaddis records all the "damned real" triple-talk, verbal flatulence, and linguistic shuffles of our time. The technique is innovative, often effective, and sometimes tedious. Speaking with the tarbaby's tongue, Gaddis decreates as no other writer has, mocks the entropic noise that jams our ears. But he doesn't create a homeostatic language to set against the stutter of popular culture. *The Recognitions* demonstrated what we've lost, *J R* what we have.

Now forget these objections and read *J R*, an Ionescan *Gravity's Rainbow*, a Barthelmian *Something Happened*, a novel by William Gaddis. Listen: "remember this here book that time where they wanted me to write about success and like free enterprise and all hey? And like remember where I read you on the train that time where there was this big groundswill [sic] about leading this here parade and entering public life and all? So I mean listen I got this neat idea hey, you listening? Hey? You listening . . .?"

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Is Faith Obsolete?

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

Westminster, $6.50

Between Belief and Unbelief

PAUL W. PRUYSER

Harper & Row, $10

The Understanding of Faith

EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX

Seabury, $8.95

CARLO A. WEBER

With one faith-crisis after another descending on us in what sometimes appears to be an endless flow, a series of books in "defense of the Faith" is scarcely surprising. This trio, each of which is significant in its own right, provides a little of something for everyone. The problem is that when one faces this kind of theological buffet, set on a literary table groaning (they must groan, mustn't they?) with delights, one tends to lose all sense of discretion. At least I do. The result of partaking too liberally from such a well-set table is a case of intellectual heartburn. Though almost every morsel in these three books has food for thought, the mix can be a little rich. I suggest, therefore, that (a) each be read, and (b) they not be devoured without adequate rest between courses.

I am going to approach these books in the order of increasing difficulty, which happens also to be the alphabetical order (lending an illusion of impartiality); and then add a quick caveat that the order of difficulty is not coincidental with the order of relevance. McAfee Brown's book is, as everything that Brown writes, filled with urbane wit, and presented in a descriptive, off-the-cuff lecture style. In what is openly a series of lectures only slightly altered for print, Brown winds his way through a very careful analysis of the context of contemporary belief. In a very clearly stated way he reviews the many approaches to faith: the personal, stressing belief in a person rather than in a series of lifeless propositions, the traditional belief in things not seen, the faith that relates to the past, but in freeing one from the evidence of the present, allows us to leap into the unknown future. The style is rambling, readable and interesting, allowing us to identify with the person of the author, as we think through problems of faith with him. Unfortunately, the title *Is Faith Obsolete?* is palpably rhetorical, as Brown argues that we are believers even in our unbelief. The essential message that Brown conveys throughout is that faith involves risk and includes doubt as an essential component. Unfortunately too what passes for faith in many "believers" is really fear. The underlying agenda is the careful propagandizing of what Brown describes as "liberation theology." A theology that is born largely of faith in the third world that will threaten most of us before it can release and transform us. In a final effort Brown demands that faith is always involved with community. At this point what began as a dialogue around the question *Is Faith Obsolete?* concludes with an almost tautological Q.E.D.

Following upon Brown's sophisticated tongue-in-cheek style, the hyperpedantic form of Pruyser's work, *Between Belief and Unbelief* is a bit heavy. In this area of the buffet table, we can start to be overwhelmed. Though not all of them are explicitly included in the text, the bibliographical references are voluminous, and his scholarly zeal for classification and taxonomies is nothing short of stuffy. This work too is composed of a series of lectures, though I suspect the audience response must have been quite different. A perfectly thorough, if perhaps humorless scholar, Pruyser begins with the sociological observation that belief is no longer the norm for contemporary society nor unbelief the exception. So there are now as many varieties of unbelief as there are of belief. Over-simplistically stated, Pruyser is attempting to show that both belief and unbelief spring from man's pursuit of happiness. But that does the book no justice at all. The cascade of references to philosophical, theological and social theory, and occasionally the social autobiography makes this book very interesting if only for the vast array of ideas that are assembled in it. If anyone is allowed these days to write a Summa, this is one. But one does get an impression throughout of more academic overkill than originality. Nonetheless, some sections deserve to be reread many times, as does one on the pre-eminence of the virtue of obedience in Christian life. Evolving gradually from the expectance of unbelief and belief as striving postures in a pluralistic society, Pruyser rejects any tolerance that is based simply on civil agreement, and reaffirms a tolerance which is a positive respect and affirmation for different ways of viewing the world.

For me, at least, the book at the top of the ladder is the *Understanding of Faith* by Edward Schillebeeckx. I scarcely feel prepared to review it all. It is brilliant theology, a scintillating refutation of the historical propensity to articulate faith in abstract and unchangeable moral propositions. But it is only for those reasonably well-versed in technical theological language. The essence is the hermeneutic question of how the Christian message should be interpreted today. This requires an analysis of language, its importance in theology, the role of languages as structure and finally a quite brilliant appeal for linguistic analysis. Language is the form of life, and the expression of a living Faith. With a slightly variant use of Anselm's "Credo ut intelligam," Schillebeeckx argues that faith is not something that is thought out by us; rather it causes us to think. So he insists that all Christians receive the same revelation; but what they receive is not expressed in the same way. All of this is theoretically engaging, but offers little enough solace to one who might be foolish enough to ask the unanswerable question, "What *is* faith?"

Attempts to answer that question lead Schillebeeckx to an assault upon what he describes as *the* great heresy: any gnosticisim that leads one to assume, with a narrow myopic view, that he possesses the whole truth. It is this

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major heresy that haunted Christianity from its origin to the present. Thinking about gnosticism leads into a discussion about the Church's teaching authority, and a prediction that that authority will become more and more the pastoral regulation of Christian language, and the determination of which language is to be regarded as valid within the Church. In this section there is an eloquent appeal for all to avoid the heresy of their own orthodoxy.

Unlike the other two books, this is not made up of lectures, and enjoys a more developmental unity, at least, that is, until we reach the section on critical theory. For a while there is a feeling of unjointedness, until we realize that it is only in the light of the study of critical theories of social and political processes that we can make sense out of any contemporary theological language.

This collection of books, as I said before, has a little something for everyone. One can approach the buffet, scan the many offerings, and sample what appeals. In no instance will the diner be disappointed. And given a more refined ability to estimate one's taste, and if one's eyes do not become bigger than one's stomach, the entire collection in defense of faith can be enormously enriching.

Massacre in Mexico

ELENA PONIATWOSKA

Trans. by Helen R. Lane

Viking $8.95

RONALD CHRIST

Last August I stood in the square of Tlatelolco in Mexico City and tried to imagine the slaughter of some 300 people as they gathered peacefully to hear student protests against the government. I recalled the news coverage—how, for instance, the soldiers fired till their guns were literally too hot to hold—and here I was on the site itself; but passing time, the weather, children playing—all aspects of happiness—erased every sign. Pain and suffering, in history as in personal life, can vanish, often to the point where they lose the power to instruct.

But during those years since 1968 a young Mexican novelist, Elena Poniatowska, has been trying to remember too, and her efforts have resulted in this shatteringly beautiful book which we need as much to understand ourselves as the Mexicans.

Recording everything she could about the incident and the events that led up to it, Poniatowska has assembled what she calls "a collage of voices," a brilliantly edited text whose texture is the weaving of anecdote, official history, gossip, placards, graffiti, journalism, eye-witness accounts, agonized interpretation. No one of these "voices," whether it is a hippy button found at the slaughtering place (I LOVE LOVE) or the cry of a mother ("My daughter's blood was tracked all over the Plaza by the shoes of youngsters running from one end of it to the other"), is sufficient in itself to rise above the poignant or the pathetic.

Individually, such details lull us with our own sentimentality. But Poniatowska, with great skill, has edited these fragments into a meaningful, moving account that reads like the best of fiction.

If that sounds like a put-down, it isn't. Just as the survivors of the massacre can only stretch toward TV and the movies for adequate comparisons to describe their experience, so we readers, distinguishing between history as sequence of events and history as discourse, know that historical

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REVIEWERS

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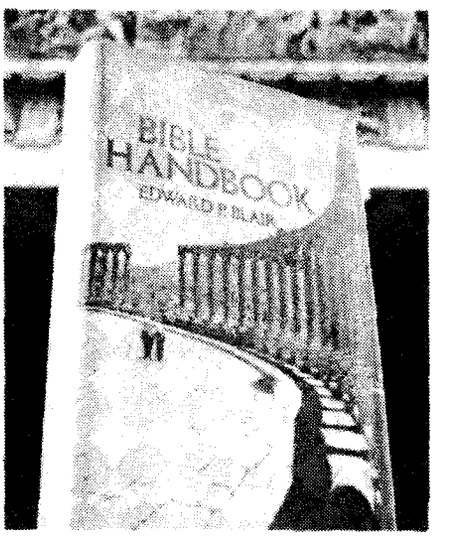

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truth is an esthetic question. "Surreal" is the word our young people carelessly misuse to describe whatever has powerful meaning for them—from the napalming of children to a mix-up at their registrar's—but at least their diction indicates our universal need for art to tell us the truth about "history."

Massacre in Mexico is, then, no mere *littérature vérité*. It is high artifice in the best sense, operating on the principles Eisenstein set forth in *Film Form*, the principles of dialectical montage where single "shots" by combination and juxtaposition create an effect that is larger than the sum of those parts. Linking by contrast, threading by atomizing a narrative account and then distributing it among other fragments, Poniatowska shuffles startling contrasts of innocence and scorn, dealing out heroes and villains whom we come to care about as their actions develop in the context of information which seems to have been a mere fifty-two pick-up before Poniatowska.

What emerges is no simple-minded indictment but a complex morality, a moral cubism that permits us to see the famous silent arch, the subsequent skirmishes and the final, apocalyptic massacre in a context of prejudice and belief, idealism and contempt, patriotism and personal concern. What makes the large scale movement comprehensible is all the small scale detail. For instance, if we agree with Carlos Fuentes that "To criticize Caesar is not to criticize Rome. To criticize a government is not to criticize a country"—and perhaps even apply his dictum to our own situation—we must also take into full recognition the force of a postal clerk's saying "It's the mini-skirt that's to blame." One great thing among many in *Massacre in Mexico* is the way it urges us to take all these things into full recognition.

Urges us to take our own lives and political destinies into full recognition. Kent, Watergate, Woodstock—everything. So *Massacre in Mexico* speaks a universal message because what Poniatowska has been able to do in creating a prose sequence on the order of Eisenstein's Odessa Steps sequence in *Potemkin* is to create in prose for contemporary Mexico what the earlier Mexican muralists did for the Mexican Revolution. The Riveras, the Orozcos, the Siquieros with their teeming panels and outsized villains and heroes are here all over again and here too each individual face is rendered because it is important, really. Poniatowska's mural is vast and it moves, because literature, unlike painting, can encompass time, and it moves *significantly* because she has dealt time out in a montage that makes for significance by comparative contrast. Here, indeed, is a terrible beauty.

Important, then, that the translation by Helen R. Lane (recent winner of the P.E.N. translation prize for Juan Goytiscolo's *Count Julian*) filters the Spanish through a crystal idiom that never blocks the original and never shadows the nature of English. Less fortunate, though more predictable, is the publisher's decision to change the original title of *"La Noche de Tlatelolco,"* with its insistent ringing of Cortez' "Noche Triste" in a modern context. But *Massacre in Mexico* is a more commercially satisfactory label and we may comfort ourselves with the thought that the book will reach more people this way. Besides, the characteristically fine introduction by Octavio Paz, Mexico's ubiquitous genius, does the work of connecting the slaughter with Mexico's past and the very useful chronology at the back of the book gives us the necessary perspective on a savage act all too characteristic of our civilization.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 35)

another part of his address, not quoted by Mr. Ford, which goes, "It (Boston) is a place where mobs have once again (evoking nightmares of Little Rock, Clinton, Tennessee, and New Orleans) confronted and endangered black children, whose parents have desperately wanted for them, in a word, *out*: an escape from overcrowded, inadequate schools and, more broadly, from the mean, brutish, utterly unpromising life of the ghetto, where (it must be stated again and again, especially today) from a third to a half of the black youths are unable to find any work, no matter how hard they try."

Mr. Ford has done well in emulating the compassionate, tortured fair-mindedness of Robert Coles. But where does he come out? Where he comes out, as I read him, is in telling Judge Garrity and the Supreme Court, "Give it up, men. The situation is hopeless. Segregated schools may be unconstitutional, oppressive and unfair to blacks, and we may not have any really practical alternatives to busing in order to desegregate them, but white people just won't stand for it and, besides, they have a point." Or to quote him directly, "After all, haven't fashionable sociologists since the late 60's . . . stressed the importance and healthiness of community solidarity?"

Therefore, Mr. Ford appears to be saying to Judge Garrity, you might do better to withdraw your judicial hand of protection from Boston's blacks and leave them to the mercy of some "political" solution which would more accurately reflect the prejudices of white people.

To all of which one is irresistibly moved to respond: now that we've got our compassion for white people operating smoothly, let's go back and do a little work on our compassion for black people. JOHN C. CORT

P.S.: After writing the above I thought I would check out Councillor O'Neil's statement that "here in Boston, the people voted 15 to 1 against forced busing." I remembered no such vote. Neither did Ed Redd, director of Boston NAACP, whom I called. I tried O'Neil's office in City Hall. He was unavailable, but his aide checked the files and could find nothing. She referred me to Joseph Brogna, staff director for the City Council. He spent about 15 minutes on it and came up with an order passed by the Council on March 4, 1974, that the following question be put on the ballot at a

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special election on April 2, 1974:

"Shall Boston public school children be assigned to a particular Boston public school on the basis of race, sex, or creed without the consent of his or her parent or legal guardian?"

Mr. Brogna said that the Masschusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that this question could not appear on the ballot. According to Mr. Brogna, no such vote ever took place. J. C. C.

Columbus, Ohio

To the Editors: It is too bad, or so it seems to me, that the article "Busing in Boston" [Oct. 10], by a Harvard Law School graduate, stresses the emotional and denigrates the Constitutional. The whole issue of desegregation, whether by busing or otherwise, is fraught with more emotion, gut reaction or whatever one chooses to call it, than most any on the current scene. But I look in vain, in this article, for any impulse, or even suggestion, that perhaps the role those who claim to be Christian should fill is that of reconciliation, of trying, and hoping to help others to try, to live with what our Supreme Court has determined should be one small way of embodying the principle of liberty and justice *for all.*

Mr. Ford's really essential argument is "what warrant does a *non-elected* federal judge have, in a *democracy*, for imposing massive social change in a democracy" and so on. That thought really bothers me. In the first place, we are not really a democracy, thank goodness. This is a *constitutional* government, with among other things, a bill of rights which was (and is, I hope) designed to protect individuals and minorities from the tyrannical whims and emotions of the majority, whether they be in Charlestown, Southie or Detroit.

Second: The fact that the Federal Judge is "non-elected" is an essential part of our tradition. If the judge were dependent upon the whims, prejudices and emotions of the current majority for his selection and his tenure, "equal justice for all" would become simply a matter of the currently prevailing view, and the bill of rights would be a pious piece of paper, no more.

As one who graduated from the Harvard Law School over 40 years ago, I feel deeply for Judge Garrity and the other Judges who are "on the spot." But Mr. Ford's article makes his task more difficult, and diminishes the standing that any of us may need the next time we seek to advocate an unpopular position. EDWARD H. LAYLIN

Brownmiller: Pro & Con

Milwaukee, Wisc.

To the Editors: Peter Steinfels' discussion of Susan Brownmiller's book *Against Our Will* [Nov. 21] requires some comment. He says that nowhere in her book does Ms. Brownmiller provide "the slightest evidence" to support the central thesis of her book that rape is a "conscious process of intimidation" whereby men keep women in subjugation. On the contrary, there is in the book, in exhaustive (and exhausting) detail a description of legal and social structures into which the ideology of rape fits all too well. That the thesis may be somewhat overstated is possible, but its plausibility is clearly established by Brownmiller. What does Steinfels want for evidence?

We live in a society that has been traditionally male-dominated. It is also a society in which women have a *de facto* curfew; in which they must disguise their gender from strange men; in which their freedom of movement is limited; in which they are socialized from birth to accept vulnerability as a way of life; in which they are blamed for being victims.

Brownmiller's book is not the whole story, but it is rather more of it that Steinfels is willing to admit. Proof, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder, and the patterns are there for anyone who honestly looks for them.

(REV.) T. MICHAEL MCNULTY, S.J.
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Marquette University

New Brunswick, N.J.

To the Editors: I wonder what Peter Steinfels would have thought of a tome on anti-semitism and genocide had he been a good German citizen living during Hitler's reign. He might be prone to react glibly, condescendingly and defensively—or so one might suppose by an analogy to his reaction to Susan Brownmiller's analysis of misogyny and genocide [Nov. 21]. Good Germans didn't see or understand what was happening when Jews in Germany were carted to the ovens. It is not surprising that a good man like Peter Steinfels didn't see rape, didn't see the near half million women a year that the terrorists of the patriarchy attacked, until he read Brownmiller's *Against Our Will.* But it is disappointing that a myopic male consciousness still afflicts his perceptions, his understanding, of what he has read.

Is race hatred in Hitler's Germany or in contemporary South Africa to merely have the significance that auto accidents today have in our nation, to merely bear some relation to societal organization "without being an important force in that organization—more

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of an effect than a cause . . ."? A good German might perceive it to be so. And so Steinfels views the vicious, societally sanctioned misogynist terrorism women experience in a patriarchal state. A good man perceives that such culturally orchestrated acts of women hatred are an effect, not a cause—not an important force—of societal organization. To say otherwise is to be labeled "doctrinaire," caught in "the coils of political ideology," "dogmatic"; to have one's argument declared strained and beset by hyperbole. A good German might have harbored such suspicions too, analogous to those Steinfels has about Brownmiller's analysis of misogyny and rape in a patriarchal state, but in the case of the good German about anti-semitism and genocide: to elevate such phenomena to be an organizing principle for society, to see such phenomenon as a prism through which to view institutions and personal relations would likely have been "demonstrably false" to good Germans, the mere rantings of fanatic Zionists. The fascist state was invisible then, in that good Germans missed and dismissed its presence, its iniquity and its incalculable integration into their own lives and dear institutions. Similarly, Steinfels does not see the patriarchal state. Fish, likewise, are said not to take much notice of their environment, of the water that everywhere surrounds them and sustains them.

His seeming inability to understand the basic nature of our environs, the structures in society that shape our lives, the politics that governs and the violence that terrorizes as being rooted in patriarchal rule—in as Brownmiller says "the perpetuation of male domination over women by force"—is hard to comprehend, except maybe that as men we find it too threatening, too fearsome a prospect, to suddenly be cast out of the waters of patriarchal consciousness and have to face a reality that seems hostile and to which we cannot immediately adapt. Steinfels wants to know where Brownmiller's empathy is for men, for good men, for men like him. He cannot see himself in her book. To believe he is therein presented is but "a cruel insult." If his criticism of Brownmiller's book is in the end to come down to such defensiveness it is almost too pathetic to be believable. Imagine the good German attempting to dismiss, if not ridicule, the critical work a Jewish scholar has done about the phenomena of anti-semitism and genocide throughout the Third Reich by arguing that the work fails to take into account the general decency of the German people. Or imagine the suggestion that to ignore acts of resistance to the Nazis by some German citizens and maybe even the compassion that many Germans had for the plight of Jews in Germany would invalidate arguments that anti-semitism was an egregiously important force in the society of Hitler's Germany. Such criticism of an important work on anti-semitism or race hatred would likely not be treated seriously and given much respect in the world of critical opinion. It is unfortunate that Steinfels' myopic perceptions and contentious wailings about Brownmiller's work are allowed to take a form where they chance being mistaken for serious criticism.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of his column is his attempt to state that *Against Our Will* does not document its thesis. That it has much to say about the reality of rape and the misogynist values of patriarchal culture to be sure, but that it fails to muster the "slightest evidence to support" the thesis that women are "the targets of a universal war of intimidation launched by men," rather—so Steinfels says—it shows that women are "the victimized noncombatants in a number of vicious wars—of nations, of classes, of races—*between* men." His statement is either one of the most fatuous perceptions or one of the most disingenuous arguments yet produced by an androcentric mind. That patriarchy had so decimated Sisterhood, had so kept herstoric struggles of women against patriarchal rule hidden or buried by ridicule (as were the "Purity crusaders" who fought rape in the 19th Century northwest—see *Purity Crusade: Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900* by David Pivar, Greenwood Press 1974), does not leave women either without a heritage of resistance to patriarchy or without a valid basis from which to argue that in addition to war between men (the mere peripheral, coup-like struggles) the central reality in world-historical terms has been the war waged against and oppression visited upon women by men. When near half a million American men die or are wounded in Vietnam over ten years that is war, but when half a million women yearly meet death or terrorist assault solely because they are women, that is not war? Patriarchal consciousness has insulated Steinfels from reality and to let reality enter in would too easily confuse his androcentric ideologic response to the evidence adduced by Brownmiller. Patriarchal ideology would rather not have us recognize the guerrilla war that its shock troops wage, the curfews and delimitations of mobility that its occupation forces enforce, the mass agit-prop activities that are conducted, the rule of law that in 1972 was able to lock up men in only about 400 out of nearly a half million rape attacks. Good men like Peter Steinfels who fail to see that there is a war going on are one reason that it will continue. The movement against rape is the elemental, most radical anti-war movement yet conceived. And just as the anti-Vietnam war movement grew to embrace the larger struggle against imperialism in general, so too Brownmiller informs us there is a world-historical struggle against patriarchy to be embraced by those who seek peace and justice.

—for Sisterhood, GARY MITCHELL

Reply

As readers of my column know, I did not deny that ours is a society in which women are treated unequally and unjustly. I would go considerably beyond Father McNulty's rather mild characterization of that society as "traditionally male-dominated," though

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whether it is a "patriarchy" or "patriarchal state," as Mr. Mitchell declares, I could not say without a clearer idea of what those terms mean. My column also did not deny—on the contrary, it emphasized—the extent and awfulness of the problem of rape—and that this problem is, as Ms. Brownmiller effectively documents, structurally related to the way we live and the values we hold (some of them).

My column simply refused to make the leap from those realities to the thesis that rape "is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all* men keep *all* women in a state of fear."

It did not, and does not, seem to me that this thesis follows from the previouly admitted realities. Let me suggest why with two other examples. The statistics on child abuse and the statistics on violent crime against the elderly are as appalling as those on rape. Like rape, these crimes are not random events; they reflect the way our society is organized (badly) and the values we hold (or don't hold). But to pass from those facts to the conclusion that child abuse is a "*conscious* process of intimidation by which *all* parents keep *all* children in a state of fear," or that violent crimes against the elderly are a "conscious process by which all young people keep all older people etc." is not only uncalled for; it is to begin dealing with these problems on false grounds; it is to belittle and ignore our human and cultural capacities for doing and being good, in exchange for the glitter of a dramatic exaggeration.

Mr. Mitchell compares me to the good German ignoring anti-Semitism and the Holocaust during the Nazi era. My first reaction is merely to find this sort of thing personally insulting and morally sleazy. Everyone with an axe to grind evidently has proprietary rights to six million Jewish deaths, to be used as a rhetorical club whenever a handy occasion arises.

But mightn't that only be the defensive response of a good German? So my second reaction is to consider the analogy more carefully. After all, the same analogy has been employed by the opponents of abortion, by those worried about euthanasia, by the critics of student radicals, by resisters to the war in Vietnam, by blacks hostile to ghetto birth control programs, and by numerous others in our society. Clearly, to make the analogy does not automatically mean it is justified. How, then, can we tell?

One method might be close attention to facts, including modes and degrees of oppression. Is rape—or even general violence against women—an officially proclaimed and executed policy of the government, as first the exclusion and later the destruction of the Jews was in Nazi Germany? If rape held the same place in our society as anti-Semitism did in Nazi Germany, would women hold so different a place in public life than Jews in the Third Reich; would laws against rape and unequal treatment of women generally even exist, no matter how wretchedly enforced; would Ms. Brownmiller's book have been published here?

I doubt whether such questions interest Mr. Mitchell. He speaks from some elevated ground, free of "myopic male consciousness," outside of the "waters of patriarchal consciousness," unburdened by "defensiveness," in full understanding of "the basic nature of our environs, the structure in society," and so on. What need has he for evidence, for checking his analogies, for making distinctions? He *knows*.

Father McNulty turns the tables on me, however. "What does Steinfels want for evidence?" he asks. Fair question. Frankly I think that Ms. Brownmiller by and large understands the rules of evidence quite well—and uses the absence of evidence to cut through many of the myths surrounding rape. To proceed in the same spirit, I believe that assertions about a *conscious* process involving *all* men and *all* women should be backed by some pretty overwhelming studies of public opinion and personal attitudes. At the very least, Father McNulty and Mr. Mitchell could have testified whether as men they were themselves *consciously* complicit in this process of intimidation through rape. Of course, two closet rapists don't make a massacre, but that testimony would have been more to the point than their simple reassertions of Ms. Brownmiller's thesis.

I tried to read *Against Our Will* carefully and openly, and both in agreeing with some of the author's positions and disagreeing with others, to take her work seriously. I do not

J.F. Powers'

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G. K. CHESTERTON SOCIETY FORUM, Saturday, February 21, 1-4 P.M., Faculty Lounge, 12th floor, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY, Lincoln Center, New York 10023. For details contact Prof. John P. McCarthy, Social Sciences Division, above address.

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have the sense that my correspondents can say the same about my column.

PETER STEINFELS

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Abigail McCarthy (Cont.)

months with no feudal dower right or substitute therefore."

Help is being mobilized. The United States Commission for International Women's Year is making a study of the relevant laws of each state. What the study shows at the moment is indicated by the statement of Dr. Catherine East, deputy coordinator of the U.S. National Commission on the Observance of International Womens' Year. "No one can sensibly advise a woman to become a homemaker today." Nevertheless, the Commission is distributing the results of the study to the respective states in the hope that the legislatures will take action on the inequities. "It will be an uphill battle," said Delegate Mary A. Marshall of the state of Virginia. It would be an act of charity and justice if the organizers of Divorced and Separated Catholics would enlist in that battle. It is an area of concrete reality in the "mutual help" for which they come together.

Another source of help has been proudly announced by the national office of the Alliance for Displaced Homemakers (4223 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, Ca. 94609). This alliance was the result of the vision of two displaced homemakers. Tish Sommers and Laurie Fields. They write: "Less than an hour and a half before the deadline for his decision. Governor Brown signed SB 825 . . . In California, it calls for setting up one pilot multi-purpose center in Alameda County, to test a new concept for dealing with barriers older women—displaced homemakers—face, in their attempts to find gainful employment, meaningful and useful work at a decent salary."

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